

Estonian Business School

**DIFFERENCES IN PSYCHOLOGICAL
CONTRACTS IN ESTONIA: THE ROLE OF
INDIVIDUAL AND CONTEXTUAL FACTORS**

Thesis for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

by

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I dedicate this work to my son, to encourage him to strive for the best.

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ABSTRACT

The changes in the field of work have changed the traditional system of industrial relations, and traditional understandings are less able to explain contemporary employment relations and behavior in organizations. Different frameworks are needed to explore these emerged relationships. The concept of psychological contracts gained increasing popularity in early 1990s and was used to describe, analyze and explain the consequences of these changes in organizational and work contexts. The psychological contract seeks to go beyond the limitations of the legal contract of employment and instead considers some of the subjective and normative elements associated with people management (Arnold, 1996).

The significance of psychological contracts for employers and organizations lies in the fact that the quality of the psychological contract is determined by the organizational leadership and human resource practice, rather than its workforce, as employers rather than employees are in a dominant and advantageous position in designing and developing working conditions and employment relationships.

In this thesis employment relations were investigated through psychological contracts at the individual level between the employer and employee. This approach permits one to explore and compare the implicit and informal aspects of the employment relationship of both parties. Informal understandings of employment relations usually take the form of perceived obligations (which are the heart of psychological contracts) with strong normative implications about appropriate behavior.

This thesis sets out to explore the psychological contracts of Estonian employees in the changed world of work and the main objective of this research was to explore the differences in psychological contracts of Estonian employees and to find the factors that cause these differences and shape psychological contracts.

The theoretical model used in this study was feature-oriented and psychological contracts were measured and compared over six discrete dimensions, which cover the changes in employment relations and also include traditional understandings and expectations. Feature orientation captures more general perceived obligations.

The feature-based dimensions were composed based on earlier works on psychological contracts, mostly on Rousseau and McLean Parks' (1993) (based on the works of Macneil (1985)), Hiltrop's (1996), McLean Parks and Conlon's (1995), Herriot, Manning, and Kidd's (1997), McLean Parks' et al. (1998), Rousseau and Schalk's (2000), O'Leary-Kelly and Schenk's (2000), and on Sels' et al. (2004) frameworks of psychological contract dimensions.

Two studies were conducted to achieve the objective. In the first study, psychological contracts were investigated from the employee perspective. Research focused on the control variables to assess the independent impact of these variables on the formation of individual psychological contracts. It is important to collect information about features and the impact of individual background and context factors on psychological contract obligations, as this information may help

managers make decisions about employing persons and consider to what extent they seek arrangements that are mutually beneficial to both employees and organizations.

The second study explored psychological contracts from both perspectives – from employee's and employer's perspectives. This is important since employers' assumptions about employees' and employers' obligations affect how the workers in an organization are treated.

The findings of the study revealed the importance of position (work status) in an organization in shaping employees' psychological contracts. The biggest differences in psychological contracts were revealed between work status groups. Lower-skilled workers showed the most different pattern of employee and employer obligations, which means that they relate differently to the organization than other employees. The second important fact is that work values and job involvement have substantial influence on the strength of employee obligations. The explanatory power of work values and job involvement in explaining the variances was relatively high in employee obligations and low in employer obligations. These findings have two implications. First, it is important to understand how psychological contracts are formed and what are the roles of pre-employment factors and the information and feedback employees get in their current employment relationship. The nature of one's work is important to consider. The second implication concerns how these different psychological contracts are managed. To get the desired contributions from their employees, employers must provide appropriate inducements. Without knowing the preferred psychological contracts of employees, it's not easy for managers to know what kinds of inducements will influence employees to perform in the desired way

The third issue to be aware of is the possibility that employee expectations in regard to employer obligations are more influenced by broader social and economic factors, which are difficult if not impossible for the organizations to control. This finding has an important implication for human resource practices that should include the inducements valued by larger social beliefs/values but choices should be made based on organizations' employee-organization relationship strategies.

The second study finding was that managers own psychological contracts influence the evaluation of employer's psychological contracts with employees. The latter causes big differences in psychological contracts between lower-skilled workers, specialists and managers groups as employer representatives and as employees. This incongruence in psychological contracts has implications on employment relationships.

Keywords: employment relationship, psychological contract, employee and employer obligations, the state of psychological contracts, managers as representatives of the organization.

INTRODUCTION

List of papers

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Presentations at scientific conferences

“A reversed management style – openness of an organisation to changes”, IV Annual Conference of the Estonian Social Sciences 2003, Tallinn, Estonia. “Psychological contracts: as a source of work behavior design and understanding”, The First International HRM Conference in Estonia “People Friendly Management” November 6, 2003, Tallinn, Estonia.

“Psychological contracts – the way employees attach to their organizations”, Psychology Applied and Applied Psychology: Conference dedicated to the 10th anniversary of the Department of Psychology at Tallinn Pedagogical University, 2003, Tallinn, Estonia.

“The role of psychological contracts in formation of job satisfaction”, V Annual Conference of the Estonian Social Sciences, 2004, Tallinn, Estonia.

“The role of psychological contracts in formation of job satisfaction”, VI Annual Conference of the Estonian Social Sciences, 2005, Tartu, Estonia.

“Psychological contracts and work values: New psychological contracts in Estonia” (paper #219), ISSWOV 2006, June 25-28, 2006, Tallinn, Estonia.

“Seeking for new psychological contracts: Different types and different outcomes”, XII European Congress of Work and Organizational Psychology, 2005, Istanbul, Turkey.

“Changed employment relationships cause changes in psychological contracts: New psychological contracts – Different types and Different work outcomes”, 9th European Congress of Psychology, 2005, Granada, Spain.

“Different patterns of organizational commitment and their predictors.” (Ref No. P-1553), 26th International Congress of Applied Psychology, July 16-21, 2006, Athens, Greece

“Relations between psychological contract patterns, work values and work outcomes” (Ref No. P-1554), 26th International Congress of Applied Psychology, July 16-21, 2006, Athens, Greece

“Psychological contracts: how they are related to work centrality, job, and career satisfaction”, Criteos Forum 2006, November 23-25, 2006, Lisbon, Portugal

“New psychological contracts witness the change in career system”, Criteos Forum 2006, November 23-25, 2006, Lisbon, Portugal

“New psychological contracts make the way to new careers”, The 9th IHRM conference, June 12-15, 2007, Tallinn, Estonia. “The influence of economy change on employee expectations – changes in psychological contract patterns.” XIV European Congress of Work and Organizational Psychology, May 13 – 16, 2009, Santiago de Compostela, Spain. “Work-Values – The Foundation for Different Job Performance Patterns.” The 12th International Conference on Work Values and Behavior, ISSWOV, June 27-30, 2010 Estoril-Lisbon, Portugal

“Intrinsic Work Values and Higher Employee Obligations Guarantee Career Success and Job Satisfaction “ 15th conference of European Congress of Work and Organizational Psychology, 25-28 May 2011, MECC Maastricht, The Netherlands

“Managers on the both sides of psychological contracts.” 16th Congress of the European Association of Work and Organizational Psychology (EAWOP 2013), 22-25 May 2013, Münster, Germany.

Relevance of the topic

It is clear that the past three decades have witnessed major changes in both the organization and the nature of work. The Estonian economy and labor market are far more globally integrated than ever before. Advances in technology have diminished barriers and differences between countries and have expanded marketplaces beyond the state borders. The Estonian labor market, workforce and organizations undergo the same changes as those in other countries. Economic trends influence labor force developments and behavior, and these in turn are important determinants of future economic developments. Many of the changes in work arrangement, organizational structures, and management systems are results of organizations' attempts to be more productive and competitive in a global market. The organizations have moved toward vertical disintegration and specialization, decentralized decision-making, and acquiring and sustaining knowledge as a means of competitive advantage.

Globalization and technological advances create both winners and losers. The numbers of jobs in some sectors have declined (e.g. manufacturing, agriculture), whereas other sectors have shown remarkable growth (e.g. IT sector). The change from an industrial to a knowledge-based society in Estonia is evidenced by the changes in the structure of employment by economic sector. Within the last twenty years remarkable changes have occurred in the manufacturing industry, where the employment rate in 1990 was 25.4% and 18.4% in 2012. The same change has occurred in agriculture (in 1990 15.8% and in 2012 3.2%), energetics (respectively 1.6% and 1.3%), and mining (respectively 1.5% and 0.9%). The opposite tendencies are seen in wholesale and retail trade and the service sector, where the employment rate has increased from 10.0% in 1990 to 17.9% in 2012, in education from 5.9% in 1990 to 9.1% in 2012, and in the information and communication sector from 1.4% in 1990 to 3.4% in 2012 (Statistics Estonia 2012). Changes in the job market, which has been restructured, are quite vivid. Rapid growth has taken place among professional specialty and the executive, administrative, and managerial occupational groups, and craft and elementary occupations workers have decreased (Statistics Estonia 2012b).

The changing nature of work is not occurring in a vacuum; it has a strong influence on employer-employee relationships and has weakened the bonds between work and place. There has been an increase in such work arrangements as self-employment, contract work, temporary work, part-time work, and outsourcing. The same applies to workplace arrangements like home-based work and telecommuting. These changes are likely to lead to adjustments in employment relationships and management and organizational behavior. Shifts in organizational form and changes in work arrangements weaken the traditional bonds between employers and their employees. There are fewer and fewer jobs that offer lifetime employment with a long-term employer-employee relationship, which were the norm before the 1990s. Employees are changing jobs today much more frequently than in the past (Arthur and Rousseau 1996). Previously employees could rely on a

permanent, stable and secure job once they fulfilled certain requirements, which consisted of job-relevant knowledge and skills as well as loyalty and compliance. Most of the jobs today are more permanent than freelance work, yet do not promise lifetime employment.

The labor market has shifted toward less job stability, which is accompanied by employment and job insecurity. Employment security is the main means of income security, and job security is the security of being employed in a job that meets the person's qualifications and skills. It is increasingly less common that jobs are defined by a fixed set of tasks, and more common that they are made up of constantly changing activities or by responsibility for a specific outcome. Employment flexibility is a pragmatic response to such problems in a time when organizations have been forced to change employment practices in the face of increased competition, fluctuations in demand, technological change, and volatile markets (Boyer 1989). Today income is less dependent on age, gender and job tenure and more dependent on whether an employee's knowledge, skills and abilities ensure the achievement of the organization's objectives and success at a given time. The changed requirements of work content and the degree of freedom within work has increased the needed level of an individual's qualifications and knowledge. This continual development of qualifications is increasingly the responsibility of the employee.

One of the possibilities to cope with employment and job insecurities is employability – an individual's ability to get and retain a job or to obtain a desired job (Forrier and Sels 2003; Fugate et al. 2004; Rothwell and Arnold 2007). Those with high employability are usually the employees with the most up-to-date knowledge and skills and with the capability to continuously build up new expertise. It is considered that employability is a requirement for both employee well-being and organizational success (Fugate et al. 2004; Van Dam 2004), as achieving flexibility in performance is the key criterion to remain competitive in the market (Thijssen et al. 2008). The only way to maintain one's employability is through the ongoing development of skills, knowledge and competences.

Employers, who recognize the importance of human capital and knowledge, apply high-performance workplace practices that give greater decision-making authority to frontline employees and with that break down the traditional distinction between labor and management. This decision-making authority involves both being active in managerial decision-making processes and shaping the task and relational boundaries of one's job (job crafting) (Wrzesniewski and Dutton 2001). These changing roles require employees to develop broader professional and new organizational knowledge and to engage in collective decision-making.

This change process offer employees an opportunity for new development, enabling employees to become more active in creating and using their potential. Employees are the ones who today develop and independently manage their own career. Most people will have many different workplaces over the course of their working lives and the proportion of people who hold multiple jobs has also increased gradually.

Two similar and equal yet different career models have been described by different scholars (Inkson 2006): protean career (Hall 2004) and boundaryless career (Arthur and Rousseau 1996). The protean career is one that emphasizes a self-directed approach to the career and the boundaryless career is the opposite to organizational career (unfolds in a single employment setting) and emphasizes the seemingly infinite possibilities the career presents and how taking advantage of such opportunities leads to success. By the new forms of career, success is not measured only in material gains, but in how well one's own goals are achieved. Employment relationships within these career frameworks will last as long as conditions are favorable for both parties – for the employer and the employee.

The changes in the field of work have changed the traditional system of industrial relations, and traditional understandings are less able to explain contemporary employment relations and behavior in organizations. Most noticeably the changes are reflected in the decline of trade union membership and legal framework (Leisink et al. 1996). The percentage of the workforce that is unionized has been declining for many decades. Coverage of collective agreements in Estonia is only 5.8%. The rate is higher in large organizations with more than 250 employees, of which 40% have collective agreements. The rate is also higher in state and local government-owned organizations (correspondingly 24% and 13%) (Espenberg et al. 2012). In 2009 Statistics Estonia carried out a survey 'Working Life in Estonia' (Eesti ... 2011), the results of which revealed that a large proportion of employees are of the opinion that the main issues that collective agreements should cover are organization of work and working conditions, and occupational health and safety. Employees have an increasingly active role in shaping the conditions of their employment. Wrzesniewski's and Dutton's (2001) study shows that employees incorporate activities they find particularly meaningful and satisfying into their jobs. This tendency leads to idiosyncratic deals (Rousseau 2001a) - employees negotiate for individualized conditions of employment, where employee and employer can both benefit. The market power of certain persons or/and the value their employers place on them also make regular employees more willing to negotiate. This kind of deal brings unpredictability, novelty and inconsistency into employment relationships (Rousseau 2005), but the flexibility that I-deals provide is necessary in order for organizations to cope with individual differences and changing employment circumstances. Idiosyncratic terms can form part of an individual's psychological contract, along with features that are shared with coworkers (Rousseau 1995).

Due to changes in the economy, markets and work, traditional employment relations and analytic frameworks don't provide useful explanations. Different frameworks are needed to explore new employment relations and behavior in organization. The decline in unionization rates, the need for flexible staffing, the great variety of forms of employment contracts, and the shift of responsibility for keeping a high qualification level onto the employee make it easier for managers/employers to establish a more personal relationship with employees. Speed and flexibility of response is the basis for competitive advantages for both

the organization and the employee. Traditional employment relationships have been put to the test. Underlying changes in organizations make it difficult to keep long-termed and fixed-termed contracts. With the decline in collective bargaining and the rise in individual contracts, informal arrangements are becoming more significant in the workplace. This brings to the forefront the flexible and informal side of employment relations. A framework like the psychological contract, which reflects the needs of the individual and his/her expectations about employment, is a way to explore and analyze contemporary employment relationships (Guest 2004).

The concept of psychological contracts gained increasing popularity in early 1990s and was used to describe, analyze and explain the consequences of these changes in organizational and work contexts. The psychological contract seeks to go beyond the limitations of the legal contract of employment and instead considers some of the subjective and normative elements associated with people management (Arnold, 1996). The psychological contract is an exchange concept providing a broad explanatory framework for understanding employee-organization relations. It explains primarily the relations between an employee and his/her employer, and specifically concerns mutual expectations of inputs and outcomes in this relationship. They bind together individuals and organizations and regulate their behavior, making possible the achievement of organizational goals. Psychological contracts provide insights into how employees construe and interpret the principles they believe should govern their personal relationships with organizations.

The significance of psychological contracts for employers and organizations lies in the fact that the quality of the psychological contract is determined by the organizational leadership and human resource practice, rather than its workforce, as employers rather than employees are in a dominant and advantageous position in designing and developing working conditions and employment relationships.

The objective and research tasks

Already in the 1950s employment relations were being described in formal and informal forms. The latter concerns unwritten contractual obligations (often implicit) between the employee and the organization (Roehling 1997). M.D.Rousseau (1995) was the one who brought psychological contracts into focus again as the changes in economy, market, and work-life have changed the previous existing employee-organization relationships. Rousseau (1989; 1990) introduced a narrower definition. She defines a psychological contract as an individual's beliefs about the nature of an agreement between the individual and the organization, resulting from promises exchanged and mutual obligations admitted. Psychological contract theory states that when an employee and an organization have a relationship that is characterized by mutual investment and reciprocal commitment to the relationship, the relationship may become a self-fulfilling prophecy that makes the employee and the organization more attached to each other (Dabos and

Rousseau 2004). As psychological contracts direct a person's behavior in the work context, this is an important topic to study.

The relationship between the individual and the organization is interactive, involving mutual influence and mutual bargaining to establish a workable psychological contract. Psychological contracts serve as signals for employees about the state of their relationship with the employer (Guest 2004). As a form of employee-organization relationship, psychological contracts change over time as organizations and employees require change.

This thesis sets out to explore the psychological contracts of Estonian employees in the changed world of work. The psychological contract is a salient part of employment relationships and is assumed to have a key role to play in understanding organizational behavior; the management of the psychological contract is essential to the organization's successful functioning. **The main objective of this research is to explore the differences in psychological contracts of Estonian employees and to find the factors that cause these differences and shape psychological contracts.**

For several reasons, it is important to understand the dynamics of psychological contracts and the underlying factors that shape the formation of these contracts. Differences in information sent by employers and received and interpreted by employees can complicate efforts by the employee and employer to comply with the commitments they believe themselves party to. Failure to comprehend and fulfill psychological contract obligations can result in negative employee behavior (e.g. high turnover, poor performance, low commitment) (Robinson and Morris 1995).

In order to achieve the main objective, eight research tasks were set. The **first task** was to construe a features-based psychological contract questionnaire to measure perceived obligations. Psychological contracts were assessed by features. This approach makes it possible to compare and find the differences between contracts across different variables. The **second task** was to assess the impact of individual background factors (gender, age, education) and to identify variations in perceived obligation strength based on these variables. The **third task** was to examine the impact of contextual work factors (organizational tenure, position in organization, size of the organization, sector) on the strength of employee and employer obligations. The **fourth task** was to find out the effect of individual work values and the meaning of working on the strength of the perceived obligations of both employee and employer. To complete the second, third and fourth tasks, the obligations that constitute psychological contracts were handled as dependant variables. The **fifth task** was to find out the relationships between job outcomes (satisfaction with job and with career) and psychological contract obligations and the state of psychological contract (trust and obligation fulfillment). Here the psychological contract's obligations and its state were used as intervening variables and job outcomes were handled as dependant variables.

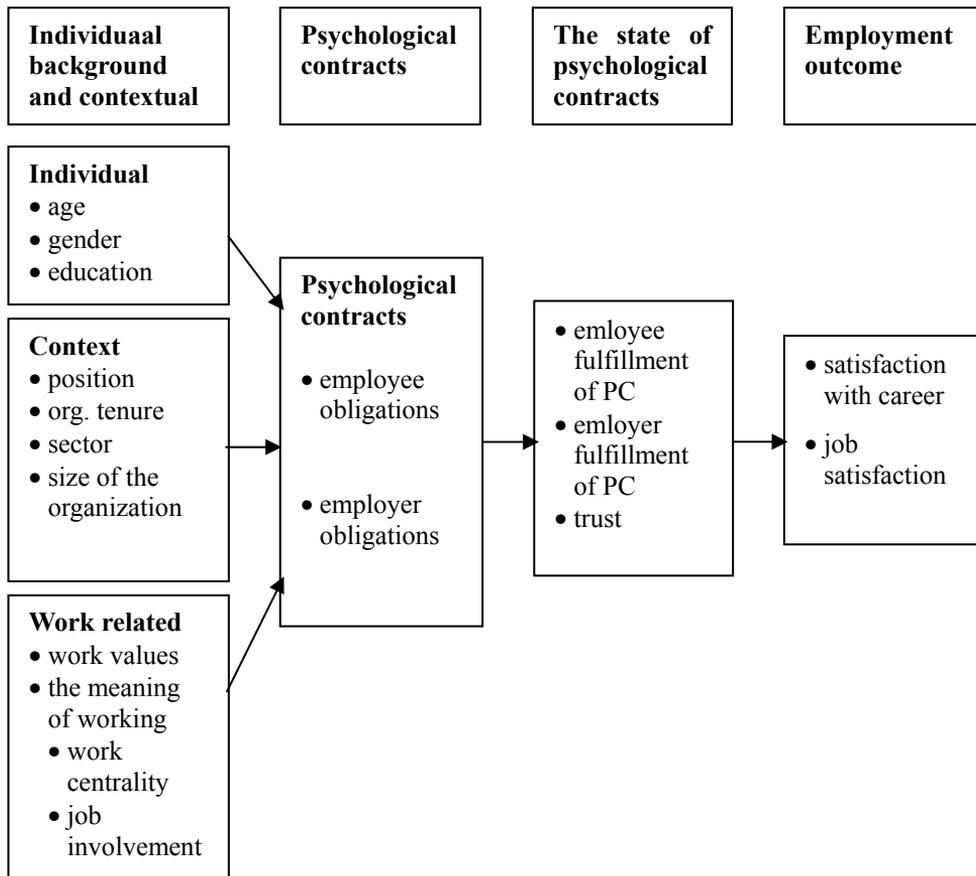


Figure 1. The analytic framework for completing second, third, fourth and fifth research task (compiled by the author)

The **sixth task** was to find out organization agents' (managers as representatives of the organization) perceptions about organizations' psychological contracts. In connection with the previous task, **seventh task** was set, the objective of which was to compare the organization's psychological contract with the managers' own (as employees) psychological contracts to find the differences and congruencies. The **eighth task** of this thesis was to compare organization agents' psychological contracts with the psychological contracts preferred by employees.

Two studies were conducted to achieve the objective. In the first study, psychological contracts were investigated from the employee perspective. Research focused on the control variables (Figure 1.) to assess the independent impact of these variables on the formation of individual psychological contracts. It is important to collect information about features and the impact of individual background and context factors on psychological contract obligations, as this information may help managers make decisions about employing persons and

consider to what extent they seek arrangements that are mutually beneficial to both employees and organizations; some also have potentially important human resource policy implications.

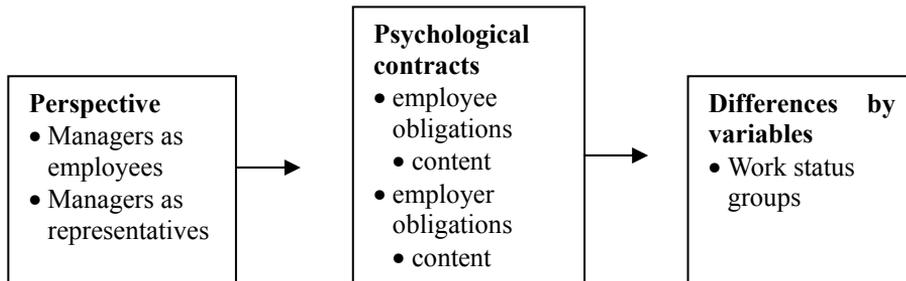


Figure 2. The analytic framework for completing sixth, seventh and eighth research task (compiled by the author)

The second study (Figure 2.) explored psychological contracts from both perspectives – from employees' and employers' perspectives. This is important since employers' assumptions about employees' and employers' obligations affect how the workers in an organization are treated. And in the case of incongruences, psychological contract breach may be perceived by employees.

The first five tasks were performed by the first study. The sixth, seventh and eighth tasks were performed by the second study. The perspective of PC and the occupational level were the key variables that formed the central focus of the second study.

Data for the thesis was collected at different time periods (first study in 2005-2006 and second study in 2009). The economic situation in Estonia was different during the periods of data collection and it is to be expected that the results are different for both studies. The years 2005 and 2006 were still a time of economic growth, but 2009 belongs to the deepening recession period.

The originality of the research and its practical merit

As the traditional system of industrial relations has begun to break down, rather different frameworks are needed to explore and explain new employment relations. The increasing need for flexibility has provoked different patterns of working and greater variety in forms of employment contracts. Traditional collective employment relations are being challenged by changing values among the workforce, by the growth of individualism and flexibility. Collectively regulated industrial relations are declining and the number of individual deals are increasing. It is easier for managers to establish more personal relationships with workers. The informal part of employment relations is becoming dominant over the formal

contract, which is the part of employment relations that regulates employees' behavior in organizations.

In this thesis employment relations are investigated through psychological contracts (PC) at the individual level between the employer and employee. This approach permits one to explore and compare the implicit and informal aspects of the employment relationship of both parties. Informal understandings of employment relations usually take the form of perceived obligations (which are the heart of psychological contracts) with strong normative implications about appropriate behavior. Psychological contracts make it possible to capture the essence of exchange in the employment relationship and explore substantive issues in that exchange from the perspectives of both parties.

To build appropriate human resource policies and practices, and manage individual performance, it is important to understand the preferred forms of psychological contracts. Psychological contract consist of perceived mutual obligations, the formation of which is influenced by human resource practices and policies. This mostly takes place during recruitment and selection or through socialization practices, performance management, career development and training.

The profile of a desirable employee psychological contract is regarded as a key factor in enhancing job satisfaction and engagement, which should have a positive impact on individual performance. Without knowing what issues are important to employees, employers' attempts to motivate and engage them might be ineffective. Individual working standards are reflected in employee obligations and the incentives employees believe they get in return from their organization are embedded in employee obligations. Organizations need to understand and address the deeper needs of employees to attract and retain them and keep them motivated.

In order to build up healthy employment relationships, it's important for managers to understand the differences in formed contracts between different work status groups and to know the factors causing these differences. When managing psychological contracts within an organization, employees shouldn't be considered one homogenous group.

This thesis contributes to psychological contract research in several ways:

First, it provides an empirical test of the feature-oriented psychological contract construct. This approach is still under-developed in this field and only a few studies have been done.

Second, the psychological contract, as a major analytic framework for this study, allows one to expand the understanding of a contract from the formal employment contract to the range of other issues that constitute employment relationships.

Third, the focus on the exchange between employee and employer in psychological contracts places the employee at the heart of the exchange. This is the reason to investigate the influence of different antecedents of an employee's

psychological contract and to provide new evidence about the influential relations between individual differences, context factors, and psychological contracts. This kind of information is the basis for possible interventions to improve the management of psychological contracts and may have human resource policy implications.

Fourth, it explores and provides evidence about psychological contracts held by Estonian workers and about the factors influencing the formation of these psychological contracts. To date no systematic research has been done to explore the content and factors influencing the formation of Estonian workers' psychological contracts. Today we don't have reliable data regarding differences in psychological contracts between different employee groups and we lack information on the understanding employers have of psychological contracts.

Fifth, it provides evidence about psychological contracts assessed by managers as the representatives of the organization. The field lacks this kind of research, as psychological contracts are mainly investigated from the employee side. These results are compared with preferred employee psychological contracts. Differences in perceptions are potential sources for misunderstandings and breaches.

The results of the study have **practical implications for the management** of psychological contracts.

First, work should be arranged in a way that allows the individual to influence his own working situation and working methods. Work should be arranged in a way that makes it possible for the worker to perform work roles and fulfill the accepted obligations. This indicates the need to consider workers' individual interests and needs. But workers don't have the same possibilities as employers to arrange their work environment and negotiate their work conditions and contracts. These processes are predominantly conducted by managers. This makes managers the central figures in balancing employment relations. It is of the utmost importance to understand the underlying expectations, needs and perceptions of both parties concerning work behavior and employment relations. The key focus should be on the negotiation of conditions and deals as an ongoing process. These processes should be made explicit and transactional and recognized as a central part of management activities.

Second, it is important to understand how employers perceive and understand employees' psychological contracts and to what extent these understandings match employees' perceived psychological contracts. The results of the study show that managers' understandings and expectations about employees' psychological contracts are heavily influenced by their own (as employees) psychological contracts. This influence causes differences in employer expectations and preferred employee psychological contracts. Differences in perceptions can cause tensions among different work status groups that work together. It is important to understand the source of potential tension and what can be done to reduce it and promote successful collaboration among different work status groups.

Third, people stay longer in organizations where their needs are satisfied, where their values are congruent with organizational values, and where they can give their contribution, which is also fairly rewarded. Different worker groups need to be motivated by different aspects of their work and with different tactics. Once the terms of the new psychological contract are understood, it is possible to implement human resource strategies and practices that support high performance and attainment of organizational objectives.

PART 1. THE THEORETICAL BACKGROUND OF PSYCHOLOGICAL CONTRACTS

1.1. New employment relationships

An employment relationship is an exchange of the contributions expected from the employee and the inducements offered by the employer.

In the continuous search for competitive advantages, organizations have implemented new ways of organizing work and employment and previously functional and generally agreed employment relationships are no longer valid.

What has happened is the loss of job security coupled with increasing demands from employers to be more flexible, innovative and willing to contribute to the organization beyond employment contracts (Bridges 1994), which can generate feelings of job insecurity. The factors influencing the change in employment relationships can be categorized into two levels: environmental-organizational and individual level factors. Environmental-organizational level factors include globalization, new technology, downsizing, outsourcing, segregation of labor markets, flexible forms of work organizations, and flexibilization of labor contracts. Individual level factors are redundancy, job insecurity, flexible working patterns, temporary or fixed-term contracts, fragmented or cross-function career trajectories, market-driven reskilling, and employability (Anderson & Schalk, 1998).

New employment relationships are founded on employee empowerment and increased employee participation and involvement in decision-making and reduced emphasis on long-term job-security and stability (Roehling et al. 2000; Boswell et al. 2001). The organization of work has implications for the skills and knowledge required as well as for the types of commitments and contracts the organization needs with its employees to fulfill its objectives (De Cuyper, Isaksson and De Witte 2005). New employment relationships include requirements for employees to take initiative and/or responsibility for organizational improvement and for their own career development and new qualities such as employability, continuous learning, flexibility, and independence (Boswell et al. 2001), which have replaced job security and organizational dependency in ensuring employee success. In turn, employees are evaluated and rewarded based on their value added. These changes indicate the individualization of employment relationships.

A solid change has also occurred in management thinking on employment relations. According to the research by Tsui et al. (1997; 2002), the employment relationship from the employer's perspective and view is an employer's approach to managing relationships with groups of (or all) employees in the organization. The shift has been from industrial relations to a human resource management perspective (Gallie et al. 1998). Managers have more direct relations and create more individualized relationships with employees. Tsui et al. (1997) found that the

mutual investment employment relationship approach (defined by a high level of contributions expected from employees coupled with a high level of inducements offered by the employer) paid off in terms of employee attitudes and employee performance. New trends in management indicate that managers take a more active part in improving performance and building employee commitment to the organization.

The values espoused in new employment relationships are presumed to have evolved from societal changes in organizational structures and organizing work and have transformed social norms about employment beliefs. The assumption is that changes in the social contract between organizations and employees on a societal level will be reflected on the individual level (Boswell et al. 2001). The subjective beliefs an employee holds about the mutual obligations between him/herself and the organization will be affected by these changes. Thus social norms are not the only factors that may shape employees' beliefs regarding employment relationship responsibilities. Expectations regarding the employment relationship are also influenced by individual- and organizational-level factors. Individuals may vary in their perception of responsibilities in the employment relationship as a result of individual work experiences and/or as career stages change (Robinson et al. 1994; Herriot and Pemberton, 1996; Sparrow, 1996). This means that perception of responsibilities can change over time, which indicates the dynamic nature of an individual's beliefs.

Research on employment (employee-organization) relationships has mainly focused on the nature of the exchange process between the worker and organization. Over the last 20-30 years, these exchange relations have been researched mainly with regard to leader-member exchange, perceived organizational support, employment relations, and psychological contracts (Shore et al. 2004). Social exchange theories maintain that individuals enter into relationships with others to maximize their benefits (Blau, 1964; Homans, 1974). The resources exchanged between partners may be impersonal, socio-emotional, or instrumental. The norm of reciprocity in social exchange serves as a starting mechanism for interpersonal relationships. An exchange-based relationship forms when the two parties reciprocally afford benefits, which leads to an understanding of mutual obligations (Coyle-Shapiro and Shore 2007). To the extent that both partners possess and are willing to supply resources strongly desired by the other, reciprocation of increasingly valued resources strengthens the exchange relationship over time. Mutual obligations are the essence of the employment contract that defines the relationship between employee and employer and these employment obligations, embedded in the context of social exchange, constitute the psychological contract (Rousseau 1989; Rousseau and McLean Parks 1992). Investigating employee-organization relationships with the help of psychological contract theory comes from a notion that psychological contracts have proven to be crucial in shaping employee attitudes and behaviors (Anderson and Shalk 1998; Rousseau and Shalk 2000) and are an intervening factor affecting the outcomes of these relationships.

1.2. The changing nature of work

Changes in three big domains – societal changes, organizational changes, and individual changes in employee's desires – have caused changes in the employer-employee relationship (Schalk 2004). Organizations today are facing a rapid succession of changes, and as a reaction to these changes organizations are more market-oriented, they have a stronger focus on cost reduction and efficiency, and they are more oriented to cooperation between organizations. To manage these poorly predictable changes and market pressures, organizations strive for greater flexibility and employee commitment to organizational goals. Employees, on the other hand, want more individualized opportunities that fit their own goals (Schalk, 2004).

The nature of work has changed not only within work categories, which causes variation growth within occupations, but also in ways that increase vagueness in classifying different types of work. Changes in economics and the use of new information technologies have created an array of new jobs and changed how existing jobs are performed. A major effect of information technology on work lies in the fact that it replaces physical activity with mental and analytical activity (National Research Council Staff 1999). In addition, the structure and content of work has been influenced by the changing markets, changing workforce demographics, changing organizational structures, and changing employment relationships. Today's markets demand competitiveness on the basis of quality, innovation and customization (Appelbaum and Batt 1994). These changes have caused an increase in technical skill requirements, variations in skills, and the cognitive complexity of work. High-performance (involvement) systems (Way 2002) guarantee quality and innovation through utilizing high skills and through the empowerment and participation of employees in the decision-making processes. This has led to a reduction in the number of job categories and the combining of jobs. Utilization of high skills and participation is warranted by training, performance-based pay, and employment security (Osterman 1994; Kochan and Osterman 1994). The changes in work and organization structure have also changed the functions and competences of managers. Managers' jobs today involve successful management of social processes within teams, as well as relations between teams and in the organization. The job of a manager is to provide resources, remove obstacles and support teams and employees, so that they can learn, solve problems, and continually enhance their effectiveness (Olalla and Echeverria 1996). Therefore the content of work must be analyzed as part of a larger system.

Work has changed in significant ways in four key dimensions: autonomy/control, task scope, cognitive (substantive) complexity, and the relational dimension of work. These are primary concepts that have been used to study the relationship between skills and compensation and other features of jobs (National Research Council 1999). The prevailing trends in work are toward teamwork, an increase in the degree of control and autonomy, and a wider task scope that requires higher

cognitive and interactive skills and activities. Autonomy/control reflects the vertical division of authority in an organization. In different organizations and on different performance levels the work has expanded to include more decision-making tasks, which in the past were a part of the managerial job. Task scope refers to the horizontal division of labor – today a job covers a wider range of tasks than ever before. Cognitive complexity is defined as the degree to which job performance needs thought and independent judgment – the depth of expertise. The relational dimension of work includes both relations between workers and their customers and relations among workers. High-involvement work systems emphasize team-work and organizing work around work units or groups. This leads to employees' broader involvement in work-teams and interactions with external customers and clients. Team-based work affects both the degree of control delegated to workers, increasing their autonomy, as well as task scope and cognitive complexity, inducing the increase in complexity (National Research Council Staff, 1999).

High employability and continuous knowledge and skill development guarantee the expected flexibility and success. Organizations need to invest in the employee's training, work experience and specific competencies. The changed employment relationships are built on the person-organization fit and employees with organization-specific knowledge, skills and work experience form the core workers' group (Remery et al. 2000), who presumably are also more committed.

The relative power of employees and employers is getting more differentiated (Schalk, 2004); the basis for negotiations over employment terms has grown for employees and they find themselves in a more powerful position than earlier. Open communication is considered characteristic of the changed, more individualistic employment relationship (Roehling et al., 2000), while job security is less important. As employees are expected to take more responsibility for their own career and development, topics for negotiation are opportunities for training and promotion, challenging and stimulating work, which would increase the employee's employability, and bonuses related to performance.

1.3. The concept of psychological contract

The term psychological contract is not a new one; it has figured in work and organizational literature since the 1960s. Psychological contract (PC) describes the relationship between employee and employer and on a general level represents what an employee is to give and get in return from his/her employer.

The origin of the term psychological contract goes back to the works of C. Argyris (1960) and Levinson et al. (1962). Their approach to PC was different from what is meant by psychological contract today. Argyris (1960) used the term *psychological work contract* to describe an implicit understanding between a group of workers and their foreman that arose as a result of a particular leadership style. In this relationship, workers and the foreman shared certain norms or their foreman was at

least aware of the workers' norms. The goal of this kind of relationship was to get workers to perform in a desired way by maintaining the informal employee culture and not violating the norms.

For Levinson et al. (1962), the *psychological or unwritten contract* is a product of mutual expectations. These contracts can be described by two characteristics: (1) they are mostly implicit and unspoken and (2) they usually antedate the relationship of person and organization. Despite the fact that the parties to the relationship may not be aware of the mutual expectations, these govern their relationship with each other. Levinson et al. identified a number of different types of employee expectations, which form the employee's side of the psychological contract. Unconscious expectations included those having to do with psychological issues (e.g. nurturance) and explicit expectations concerning job performance, the use of specific skills, social relations in the work place, job security, and economic rewards. The company's expectations could be drawn from the circumstances under which it operates, its policies and practices, values, statements, and its evaluations of employee job performances. Levinson et al. viewed PC as a dynamic and often changing relationship that is characterized by reciprocal interaction of the two parties, in which changes are induced by the changing needs of the individual or the organization.

Although the development of the psychological contract construct isn't complete, today different authors agree that the *psychological contract* describes employee-employer relationships and can be defined as an individual's belief regarding the terms and conditions of a reciprocal exchange agreement between the employee and employer.

M.D. Rousseau (1989; 1995) was the one who brought psychological contracts into focus again as changes in the economy, market and work-life changed the previously existing employee-organization relationships. Rousseau (1989; 1990) introduced a narrower definition of psychological contract. The psychological contract, by her definition, is subjective in nature and belongs to the domain of individual beliefs (Rousseau and Parks 1993; Rousseau 1995), which are formed within a certain social context and shaped by the individual's interaction with the employer (Rousseau and Wade-Benzoni 1994). By her definition, the psychological contract differs from the more general concept of expectations in that the psychological contract is promissory and reciprocal (1989). She states that a psychological contract emerges when one party believes that a promise of future returns has been made, a contribution has been given and thus an obligation has been created to provide future benefits (Rousseau 1989, 1990, 1995). Some researchers (Sparrow 1996; Sutton and Griffin 2004) studying psychological contracts have used the term expectations, but usually in a limited probabilistic sense (Roehling 2008). According to these researchers, expectations are defined as the things that should occur or are likely to occur. Most researchers treat the psychological contract as perceived obligations – a duty, contract, promise or other kind of social, moral or legal requirement that compels one to follow or avoid a certain course of action (Roehling 2008). M.D. Rousseau's conceptualization

focuses on a specific kind of obligation: the perceived promises are the basis for beliefs that constitute the psychological contract and are recognized in the form of obligations. M.V. Roehling, investigating the differences between expectations and obligations, came to the conclusion that normative expectations (ought to or should) and obligations are closely related and difficult to distinguish. This means that the results aren't different when measuring PC on the basis of normative expectations or obligations. However, most authors refer to expectations or obligations that are based on perceived promises. The subjectivity of contracts means that while the individual employee believes in the existence of a particular psychological contract or reciprocal exchange agreement, the employer or other organizational members can have a different understanding of the contract (Rousseau and Parks 1993). Although the psychological contract is perceptual and subjective and its content is open to interpretation, it is very real to the person who holds it, as the person's behavior and attitudes toward work and relationships are influenced by these perceptions.

A psychological contract exists only within the context of an exchange relationship and that makes mutuality its inherent characteristics. This means that perceptions of obligations should cover both sides – the organizational and the individual side – even when framing the psychological contract as an individual's perception only (De Cuyper et al. 2005). An employee's behavior is shaped by his/her perceptions of his/her obligations toward the organization and organization's obligations toward him/her, but also by perceptions of how well these mutual obligations are fulfilled (McFarlane Shore and Tetrick 1994; Tekleab and Taylor 2003). Both parties are accountable for the terms of the psychological contract, and therefore promises followed by employee effort lead to expectations of the organization's fulfillment of its obligations. A psychological contract is obligatory, as expectations of perceived obligations must be fulfilled in order to prevent contract violation.

Psychological contracts over time take the form of a schema or mental model (Rousseau 2001), and these schemas are relatively stable and durable. Schemas play an important role in how a person interprets and reacts to the situations and environment around him/her, as schemas guide a person's perception and how he/she interprets received information and also how he/she incorporates procedure or routine to generate appropriate behaviors (Bless et al. 2004). Schemas organize our personal experiences into mental models linking concrete observations to larger patterns and meanings, providing us with ways to make sense of information regarding the intentions and goals of an employer and its agents, and one's own role and obligations (Rousseau 2003). And as schemas, psychological contracts provide employees with order and continuity in a complex employment relationship, allowing for predictability and control (McFarlane Shore and Tetrick 1994).

1.4. The function of the psychological contract

It is argued that psychological contracts occur because of the lack of formalized contracts, as it is not possible to work out all aspects of employment and fix them in explicit contracts. Psychological contracts fill the gaps between the formal contract and all that applies to the employment relationship. There are four main functions the psychological contract fulfills in employment relations.

The first function of the psychological contract is to reduce insecurity and to increase predictability (Morrison 1994). By reducing an individual's uncertainty and creating a greater sense of security, psychological contracts make a person believe that he/she has a mutually understood agreement with his/her employer (McFarlane Shore and Tetrick 1994). The perceptions of predictability and control are likely to enhance the employee's motivation. Sparrow (1996) has stated that psychological contracts act in a similar manner as hygienic factors – good contracts may not always result in superior performance but poor contracts tend to act as demotivators.

The second function of the psychological contract is to shape and direct the employee's behavior and define how the employee evaluates the way the employer treats him/her (McFarlane Shore and Tetrick 1994). Employees weigh their obligations toward the organization against the commitments the organization has made toward them and adjust their behavior on the basis of critical outcomes. Psychological contracts specify performance levels in return for rewards, and in this way help to predict the kind of contribution an employee is ready to make and what kind of rewards the employee is predicting in return (Sparrow and Hiltrop 1997). Perceived obligations operate as standards that regulate employees behavior (Shore and Tetrick, 1991; Rousseau 2001). Comparisons of one's behavior against these standards cause the employee to alter the behavior if the standard has not been met.

There is much evidence that individuals behave in ways that are consistent with their goals (Cleveland and Murphy 1992). Therefore the development of a psychological contract can be thought of as a deliberate goal-oriented process, in which an individual attempts to establish an agreement with the employing organization that will address a variety of employment objectives (McFarlane Shore and Tetrick 1994). Based on this, the psychological contract's **third function** is to provide a goal structure – for both short- and long-term goals – that affects employee behavior (Conway and Briner 2005). When psychological contracts contain obligations relevant to an employee's long-term goals, these give the employee the confidence that he/she is able to influence his/her destiny in the organization, since he/she is party to the contract (Shore and Tetrick 1991).

Finally, **the fourth function** of the psychological contract is to give an employee a feeling of control regarding what happens to him/her in the organization. It gives an employee a sense of being able to influence what happens to him/her in the organization (McFarlane Shore and Tetrick 1994; Anderson and Schalk 1998). The development of the psychological contract involves not only the use of direct

inquiry and monitoring, but also active attempts on the part of the individual to negotiate an agreement consistent with his/her employment goals. This gives an employee the sense of being an equal partner in the organization. Negotiation is most likely to affect the formal employment contract in a direct way in aspects that are likely to influence the psychological contract. These negotiations take place only when employees are confident in their rights to and possibilities to negotiate. According to Robinson and her colleagues (1994), psychological contracts are means to bind individuals and organizations together.

1.5. The formation and development of a psychological contract

A psychological contract is a perceptual cognition defined at the level of the individual. This means that individuals actively make sense of their psychological contract, based upon their experiences within and outside of the organization (Rousseau, 1995, 2001; Shore and Tetrick, 1994). A psychological contract is the perception of reality, not reality as such (Rousseau 1989; 1995; Schalk and Freese 1997), and the perceiver is an active constructor of reality (Robinson, 1996). A psychological contract is mainly formed through interaction with the employer (Sutton and Griffin 2004) and the aim is to develop a realistic perception of the work relationship (Rousseau 1995; Shore and Tetrick 1994). Reducing uncertainty is key, and the exchange of information between employee and organization is in the heart of the process.

Rousseau (2001) claims that the beliefs about psychological contracts are shaped by *pre-employment factors* (beliefs regarding work, values, motives), *on-the-job experiences*, and *broader social context* (societal beliefs and norms), which affect the creation of meaning around the promises workers and employers make to each other.

In accordance with this idea, she distinguished four stages in psychological contract formation and development. The **first stage** concerns the pre-employment period, when professional norms and societal beliefs and values have a general role. The **second stage** emerges during the recruitment process, when more specific components of psychological contract are formed. The essence of the **third stage** is post-entry socialization processes and the **fourth stage** is the later stage, an ongoing process of exchanging promises and commitments. These different stages clearly indicate that factors of very different levels are involved in psychological contract formation, namely societal, organizational and individual factors (Conway and Briner 2005).

Although three of the four stages of psychological contract formation take place in the context of employment, it also seems plausible that factors outside the employing organization may have an impact on the formation of expectations and commitments. Sutton and Griffin's (2004) study provides some evidence that pre-entry expectations have a significant impact on post-entry expectations and experiences. Pre-employment expectations most likely have a kind of effect, as

these provide a lens through which the person views employment experiences and the obligations these create. These expectations are formed by an individual's different experiences and socialization contexts, and some of them account for individual differences in psychological contracts while others contribute to widely shared features (Rousseau 2001).

An individual's previous employment experiences, but also the experiences of others who are close or important to the individual, the cultural and socio-economic context, and values and norms accepted in the socialization process influence the formation and later shape one's psychological contracts. In addition to these social factors, broader economic, political and legal factors can also shape the formation of psychological contracts or the perception of mutual obligations. Legalism is a source of beliefs that shape pre-employment expectations and understandings about employment relationships. Societal culture creates systems of beliefs regarding the law and legal practices and the rights and obligations of its members (Stolle and Slain, 1997). An organization's practices in enforcing the law can evoke socially shared understandings of conditions of employment. Society-wide expectations and beliefs are relatively stable and enduring, and that is a reason why these kinds of expectations and beliefs may have a strong impact on individuals' expectations about their employment relationships. The same applies to economic and political factors.

The organization and employment relationship plays a fundamental role in forming and shaping the psychological contract (Conway and Briner 2005). An organization and its agents (Rousseau 1995) communicate promises and expectations to employees in both explicit and implicit ways. Explicit ways usually include formal contracts and any kind of written communication and direct interactions (statements, announcements etc.). Implicit forms of communication are complex and subtle. Employee can learn about mutual obligations and promises through observing the behavior and responses of others. Employment relations are social exchange relationships in nature and guided by the reciprocity norm, which means that employee-employer exchange creates obligations in a wide range of circumstances. Formal employer policies and practices, communication with employees, as well as norms, ethics, and individual differences in needs, motives and dispositions could be expected to have an influence on the formation and development of psychological contracts. Some authors consider the line manager to be the most influential agent (Guest and Conway 2000) while others feel it is the middle manager (Sparrowe and Linden 1997).

These organizational influences start with the recruitment process, an interactive process in which promises are exchanged and the actions and messages of both parties – employee and employer – are evaluated (Rousseau 1990; De Vos et al. 2003). Dunahee and Wangler (1974) suggest that psychological contracts initially emerge at the time of pre-employment negotiations. Individuals seek information during recruitment and selection which later will be the basis for further refinement of the psychological contract during the early employment period.

At entry, most newcomers have only limited or incomplete information about the terms of their employment relationship (Rousseau 2001). They start to seek information and interpret their initial experiences to predict future events and change their expectations or confirming beliefs, thereby making their psychological contract schema more complete, which in turn should help them to reduce uncertainty and make their experiences in their new work setting more predictable (Mc Farlane Shore and Tetrick 1994). This sense-making process implies that perceived obligations are based on one's interpretations of his/her experiences in the work setting (Rousseau, 2001). These experiences relate to the contractual behavior of both parties in the employment relationship, i.e. the inducements provided by the employer and the contributions made by the employee (de Vos et al 2003). The need for sense-making will be greatest when uncertainty is high (Rousseau 1995, 2001; Shore and Tetrick 1994) and the individual is motivated to make changes in his/her beliefs. Consequently, it can be concluded that psychological contract formation is the most intensive during the period of entry and early socialization (first months after entry) (Morrison 1993), during which perceived obligations are most likely to change as a consequence of organizational actions that inform newcomers about the inducements and obligations the organization is willing to make and take (thereby affecting changes in perceived employer obligations) and also about the contributions and obligations the newcomer should make and take in return (thereby affecting changes in perceived employee obligations). Rousseau (1995) has stated that newcomers' perceptions of organizational promises will weaken during the first months in their new jobs, while the perceptions of their own promises will increase. This indicates that beliefs about given promises concerning the organization's commitments and possible inducements form earlier and the set of individual obligations is formed subsequently in accordance with these perceived promises. This stresses the importance of well-established and well-managed human resource policies and practices. Most psychological contracts develop under circumstances of incomplete information about the nature of the employment relationship and therefore different psychological contracts are expected to emerge. The quality and reality of psychological contracts depends much upon whether high-quality sources of information are available and whether these sources provide consistent information. If so, both employee and employer are more likely to make correct predictions about the actions of the other and are more able to identify appropriate behavior to maintain the relationship and fulfill the commitments each has made (Rousseau 2001).

Herriot and Pemberton (1997) are convinced that negotiating psychological contracts leads to more explicit contracts, and that explicit contracts build trust in the employment relationship, and increase the match between employee and employer expectations. They propose a four-stage model of psychological contracting. The first stage is informing, during which each party informs the other of their needs and what they are prepared to contribute. The second stage is negotiating, when both parties negotiate and agree what they are prepared to do for each other. During the third stage (monitoring) the parties to the contract monitor

one another's behavior to ensure the promises are being kept and they are being treated fairly. The fourth stage is either renegotiating or exiting. Successful renegotiations change the contract in the desired directions and ensure the continuation of the relationship. Exiting occurs if one of the parties decides to exit the relationship.

Over time, psychological contracts become more stable as feedback from the environment improves or confirms their accuracy. Psychological contracts are positive if a person's experiences are consistent with the beliefs he/she holds about the mutual obligations. An employee sees the immediate manager as a key figure in establishing and maintaining the psychological contract, as the employee has to depend on his/her immediate manager to carry out many of the contract terms. In addition to the immediate managers, co-workers also play an important role in the socialization process. Co-workers may share one's perceptions of the supervisor and of the organization. Co-workers are also the source of information. Obtaining information can occur through direct communications or through the observation of interactions among co-workers or between co-workers and a supervisor.

As a more stable understanding about the employment relationship develops, uncertainty about the relationship is reduced and active sense-making processes decrease (Anderson and Thomas 1996; Rousseau 1995, 2001). Stable psychological contracts tend to resist change. Changing a psychological contract requires an employee to be motivated to process new information that differs from the upheld beliefs. A key factor in this process is quality communication with the employee's immediate managers and the resulting behavior, as negotiation, discussion and sense-making make it easier to revise the existing psychological contract. When the change is viewed positively, the person will be more motivated to make the efforts that changing a psychological contract requires (Rousseau 2001).

McFarlane Shore and Tetrick (1994) view the development of the psychological contract as resulting from the interaction of the individual with the organizational environment in a broad sense. They propose that individuals are both shaped by circumstances and situations, and also shape these situations. In spite of the uniqueness of psychological contracts, there are also forces that may encourage some similarity in psychological contracts among individuals within organizations (McFarlane Shore and Tetrick 1994). Research in the field of other theories (e.g. social learning theory, social information processing theory, social comparison theory) has indicated that individuals socially construct the meaning of work and its context. Individuals observe the behavior and reactions of those around them, their co-workers and managers, to help make sense of the context and their roles. The sense-making process occurs on both the group and individual level. The greater the social interaction and work interdependence among co-workers, the less variability in their perceptions of work and the work environment (Klein et al. 2001). These group and interpersonal influences shape the social construction of employment relations, such as psychological contract fulfillment (Henderson et al. 2008).

Even if an organization attempts to offer the same deal to everyone, the psychological contract would vary to some extent across individuals. Individual differences have an impact on how employees make sense of their work and employment relations. An employee's personality influences the formation of the psychological contract through three processes: through the job and task choices a person makes, the way the person construes the terms of the contract, and how the person enacts contractual behavior (Raja, Johns and Natalianis 2004). In addition to individual differences, there are other important factors that influence the formation of one's psychological contract to consider. These are work values, career strategy, and exchange orientation (Guest and Clinton 2010), but also factors from broader sources, such as social norms, perceived moral obligations, or the requirements imposed by law. An individual's goals and expectations for agreements, which also have an impact on psychological contract formation, are influenced by the information one retrieves from interaction with organizational representatives, one's perceptions of organizational culture, and human resource policy and practices (Turnley and Feldman 1999).

1.6. Types of psychological contracts

Although there are no common agreements about the content of the psychological contract, it is generally agreed that it has changed over last 20-30 years. Researchers agree that psychological contracts have changed from the "*old deal*" to the "*new deal*" (Herriot, Pemberton, 1995, 1997). Hiltrop (1995) has described the past and emergent forms of psychological contracts through six distinct characteristics: focus, format, underlying basis, employer's responsibilities, employee's responsibilities, contractual relations, and career management. The focus has shifted from security and continuity to exchange and future employability. New contracts by format are unstructured, flexible, and open to negotiation. The underlying basis used to be traditions, social justice and socio-economic classes, while new contracts are based on market forces, abilities, and skills and added value. Earlier employers were accountable for ensuring job security and continuity, training and a continuous career; ad now they are expected to guarantee an equitable reward for added value. An employee's loyalty, attendance, compliance with authority, and satisfactory performance has been exchanged for entrepreneurship, innovation, and excellent performance. the employee's initiative has increased in career management and in negotiations over employment terms.

The "*old deal*" is described as a relationship that is built on mutual trust and the fulfillment of obligations. The organization's structure and its employees' current and future positions in it were stable and clear. Employees offered their commitments to the organization and in return the employer provided job security. These employment relationships are described as paternalistic. Within these relationships, each party is helping the other out regardless of whether it would be rewarded or reciprocated. The "*new deal*" is perceived as transactional, where

inputs and outputs can be quantified; there is no loyalty and affection (Herriot, Pemberton, 1995). It's built on fair pay and fair treatment plus opportunities for training and development, but the employer is no longer offering job security.

Rousseau (1990; 1995) named these two deals respectively *relational* and *transactional* psychological contracts, borrowing the concepts from MacNeil's typology. Twenty years ago MacNeil (1985) was already offering a typology of contracts that can be used to categorize psychological contracts. He argued that there are two types of contracts: transactional and relational. This distinction between contracts is similar to Blau's (1964) notion of two types of exchange: economic and social.

The most commonly used typology of psychological contracts is based on the transactional-relational continuum. Rousseau proposed that transactional and relational psychological contracts differ on five important dimensions: stability, scope, tangibility, focus, and time-frame (Rousseau and McLean Parks 1993; Rousseau and Wade-Benzoni 1994). Based on these dimensions, two different types of contracts were construed as opposite ends of a continuum.

Transactional contracts involve specific, monetizable exchanges between parties over finite and often brief periods of time (Rousseau 1990; Robinson et al. 1994). The organization promises to provide adequate compensation, a safe working environment, and reasonable short-term guarantees of employment in exchange for the employee's fulfillment of a narrow, specified role of responsibilities. In this kind of relationship, employees are mostly concerned about themselves as the primary beneficiaries of the exchange and therefore transactional contracts imply an egoistic or instrumental model of human nature (Rousseau & McLean Parks, 1993).

Relational contracts involve open-ended, less specific agreements that establish and maintain a relationship (Rousseau 1990; Robinson et al. 1994). The organization provides opportunities for training and professional development, as well as long-term job security, in exchange for the employee's fulfillment of generalized role obligations. Employees in these relationships contribute their commitment and involvement to the organization, often in the form of organizational citizenship behavior (Robinson & Morrison, 1995) and expect that the organization will provide a sense of community and opportunities for professional growth and career. Relational contracting relies on a collectivistic or socialized model of human nature (Rousseau & McLean Parks, 1993).

M.D. Rousseau proposed that transactional and relational contracts are extreme opposite ends of a single continuum underlying contractual arrangements (Rousseau 1990; Rousseau and McLean Parks 1993). She argued that the more relational the contract becomes the less transactional it is. Although Rousseau and her associates (Rousseau 1990; Robinson et al. 1994) found support for this typology of contracts, the clear distinction between relational and transactional relations has not been always supported by empirical studies. Today researchers have abandoned the view that employment relations are purely economic or socio-

emotional in nature and that transactional and relational psychological contract are simple opposites. The transactional and relational distinction of psychological contracts has been adapted for organizational research by many researchers as relatively independent dimensions that can vary freely irrespective of one another (Conway and Briner 2005) and not as opposite ends of one continuum. Recent theory acknowledges that most employment exchanges involve a combination of economic and socio-emotional currency (Robinson et al. 1994; Coyle-Shapiro and Kessler 2000). Psychological contracts are multidimensional and transactional and relational aspects are independent, and both aspects can characterize the same psychological contract.

To solve this problem, Rousseau and Wade-Benzoni (1994) developed strategic typologies that represent refinements of the transactional and relational contracts. They added two types of psychological contracts based on the same two dimensions – tangibility (specified versus unspecified performance term) and time-frame (short-term versus long-term relations). The *transitional psychological contract* includes short-term relations and unspecified performance criteria, and *balanced psychological contracts*, in contrast, include long-term relations and well-specified performance criteria. *Balanced psychological contracts* combine commitments on the part of the employer to develop workers, while anticipating that workers will be flexible and willing to adjust if conditions change. Such contracts anticipate renegotiation over time as economic conditions and worker needs change (Rousseau 2004; Dabos and Rousseau 2004). The first type is inherent in the period of organizational change. The second may dominate in organizations in which shared values and high commitment are needed to attain specific organizational goals. These types face the same problem as the previous two – empirical studies don't confirm the proposed content, and specifications of these types are not univocal (Robinson, Kraatz and Rousseau 1994). The concept of employability has risen into view as the old psychological contracts and traditional career have lost their relevance. As can be seen in recent studies, the change in psychological contracts is the shift from career dependence to career resilience, from employment to employability. Employability is assumed to be the key feature of the 'new' psychological contract. It has been advanced as the mechanism to restore a healthier balance in the exchange between employer and employee (Pascale, 1995). Employability has become a part of the new balanced psychological contract.

These different types show that psychological contracts differ in the extent to which they are specific. Parks (1992) has proposed that transactional and relational contracts may be either exhaustive (fully described) or fragmentary (incomplete and uncertain). They also differ in duration, which reflects the degree to which they involve investments and long-term relationships. The transactional and relational contract dimension is seen by McFarlane Shore and Tetrick (1994) and by Rousseau and Wade-Benzoni (1994) on a continuum of monetizeable and nonmonetizeable rewards and the weight given to these elements. Another issue brought forth by McFarlane Shore and Tetrick concerns the degree to which

contracts are individualized or standardized. Contracts can be egalitarian, contributing to group cohesiveness, or individualized, representing potential contributions to the organization.

Thompson and Bunderson (2003) have proposed an additional aspect that shapes the psychological contract. They don't consider *ideological contract* as an entirely distinct type of psychological contract, rather, these ideological obligations represent one dimension of a multidimensional contract. Ideology-infused contracts involve employee beliefs that the organization is obligated to demonstrate a credible commitment to and investment in a valued cause or principle. In return, the employee is obligated to perform his/ her role in a way that promotes the organization's ability to pursue that cause and, if needed, ready to make some sacrifices. They make an assumption that the employee, holding this kind of contract, is willing to engage in extra-role or altruistic behaviors. No firm conclusion can be made about this contract type, as little research has been done on the subject.

Tsui et al. (1993) proposed that organizations may develop *job-focused* or *organization-focused strategies*. The job-focused strategy involves a very specific contract in which both employee and organizational obligations are made very explicit. It is a flexible contract in which neither the employee nor the organization is committed beyond the specified contract period. The organization-focused strategy is much less specific, and involves employee commitments to invest in both the job and the organization in exchange for long-term returns from the organization. This typology is very similar to the relational and transactional contract types proposed by Rousseau (1989).

Shore and Barksdale (1998) presented a typology based on the degree of perceived obligations and the level of (perceived) balance into account. Studying interrelations between employee and employer obligations, they identified four types of interrelations. They categorized psychological contracts into four types based on the extent to which there is balance in obligations and on the degree to which the parties are perceived to be obligated – mutual high obligation, mutual low obligation, and employee over-obligation and employee under-obligation. The two underlying dimensions in their research were the level of obligation between employee and employer (contract scope) and the extent of balance or imbalance. In balanced relationships, both parties hold similar levels of obligation to one another. In unbalanced relationships, one party is perceived to be significantly more or less obligated than the other party. A low level of employee obligation indicates that the employee perceives himself/herself as having few obligations toward the organization, and the opposite is true with a high level of obligation. A low level of employer obligation indicates that the employee perceives his/her organization to have few obligations toward him/her. A high level of employer obligation signals the opposite. Psychological contracts with mutual high or mutual low obligation are balanced with respect to many or few of the perceived exchange terms. Employee under-obligation is an unbalanced type and refers to an exchange in which the organization's obligations outweigh the employee's obligations.

Employee over-obligation, also an unbalanced relationship, indicates the presence of substantially more employee obligations than employer obligations.

Relationships with mutual high obligation are considered relationships with a strong social exchange in which both parties feel highly obligated to provide a wide range of contract items, which will result in greater levels of employee contributions (Shore and Barksdale 1998). N. De Cuyper and her colleagues (2008) found that the mutual high obligation psychological contract is the most beneficial in terms of psychological outcomes. Employees perceiving mutual high obligation were more committed to their organization and more satisfied with their jobs than employees holding mutual-low relationships. They also found that perceiving mutual low obligation or having an imbalanced psychological contract might be equally harmful. They suggested that mutual low obligation result from prolonged imbalance, which is likely to be associated with contract violation. Shore and Barksdale argue (1998) that if balance is not achievable in the longer term, then one or both parties will seek to end the relationship.

A similar approach to studying the psychological contract was seen in Tsui et al.'s (1997) work. They also studied the exchange relationship between employee and employer, but they examined the exchange relationship from the employer's perspective – the employee-employer relationship was defined by the organization. Using categorical variables to represent the inducements offered from the side of employers and contributions expected from employees, they created four relationship categories: two balanced – *quasi spot contract* and *mutual investment* – and two un-balanced – *under-investment* and *over-investment*. The quasi-spot contract is a relationship with a low mutual investment and the exchange terms are mainly economic in nature. A mutual investment, in contrast, is a relationship with high investments by both parties and has a high socio-emotional focus. The under-investment relationship is unbalanced, as the employee's investments are significantly bigger than the employer's investments, while the over-investment relationship is characterized by a high investment from the employer and a low investment from the employee.

1.7. The content of psychological contracts

The content of psychological contracts is broadly based on the employee's beliefs about the contributions he/she promises to give to the employer and what he/she believes the employer is obligated to offer in return. The content of a psychological contract is not what an employee actually gives to his/her employer and what he/she gets in return, but rather the implicit and explicit promises around the exchange (Conway and Briner 2005) that are perceived as mutual obligations in formed employment relationships. In this way, the contents of psychological contracts may include anything the employee promises to contribute and anything the employer promises in return. The content of modern psychological contracts is assumed to be dynamic and sensitive to organizational changes. The contracts

incorporate changes that have appeared among both parties' needs and expectations toward each other. Dynamic means also, that with longer service person's psychological contract becomes broader and deeper (Guest 1998), containing more items than from the entry. Researchers have attempted to describe and assemble psychological contract items, but as these contracts are subjective, the actual content varies between different persons. Employee contributions may include promise of doing one's work on high qualitative level, keeping one's skills and knowledge on needed level, being flexible, taking organizations problems in concern, to cooperate and etc. Employers can contribution through providing interesting work, job security, promotion and career prospects, fair pay, training and developmental opportunities, respect and feedback and autonomy in job (e.g. Herriot 1992, 1995; Rousseau 1995; Herriot et al. 1997; Coyle-Shapiro and Kessler, 2000; Paul et al. 2000; Flood et al. 2001; Conway and Briner 2005).

Psychological contracts contain two different types of information. The first concerns information about what is exchanged in this relationship and the second is information about how the exchange will be done (Conway and Briner 2005). The "what" concerns things both parties promise to offer each other (different items mentioned earlier) and "how" concerns human resource policies and practices, the bases on which the exchange of contributions will be done. The first type of information is today better studied.

A central aspect of psychological contracts is reciprocity, which means that both what the parties of the contract promise and what they believe has promised in return have to be joined together in a reciprocal manner (Conway and Briner 2005). N. De Cuyper et al. (2008) found that many employers' obligations are beneficial only when they are matched by a similar level of employee obligations. It means that employee contributions are part of the content of the psychological contract if the employee believes that in return for his/her contribution, the employer will make its contribution on a promise it has made. Likewise, the employer's inducements are part of the content of the contract if they are given in return for employees contributions. And that means that only obligations that arise from explicit or implicit exchange-based promises become a part of the actual psychological contract (Morrison and Robinson, 1997). Although the psychological contracts formation starts before a person's entry to the organization, the previously held understandings and expectations about employment relationships are included in obligations form in the psychological contract only when they are conveyed to employee in a promissory manner (Coyle-Shapiro et al. 2008).

Researchers have proposed that organizational strategies are linked with psychological contracts (Parks 1992; Tsui et al. 1993; Rousseau and Wade-Benzoni 1994). Research on organizational strategy and human resource practices has showed that an alignment between business strategy and human resource strategy is a necessary precondition for organization success and that the goals of the organization have impact on development of the psychological contract. Organizations may have a predominant type of contract (McFarlane Shore and Tertick 1994) that typifies employee-employer relations. Organizational goals are

related to the type of psychological contract that emerges. For example, organizations may prefer more flexible contracts to be more responsive to a changing environment or, in contrast, may choose more open-ended relational contracts of longer duration to build strong relations. The adopted business strategies are communicated to employees mainly through human resource practices which are relatively stable and institutionalized. Human resource practices represent intended messages regarding the relationship between the employer and employee (Guzzo and Noonan, 1994).

McFarlane Shore and Tertick (1994) have described the features in which strategic contracts can differ. Contracts may differ in regards to the extent that they are specific and on the length of their duration. The latter determines the amount of investments into the relationship. Contracts may also be either transactional or relational. Usually the contracts involve elements of both forms, the difference lies in the weight given to these elements. Some empirical evidence has shown that the type of psychological contract defines the potential resources to be exchanged and the nature of those resources (Rousseau 1990; Coyle-Shapiro et al. 2008). Another difference lies in the degree to which contracts are individualized or standardized. Organizations may implement an egalitarian strategy in negotiating contracts with employees or may individualize contracts that represent the equity strategy, in which rewards and opportunities are distributed according to employee contributions (Kabanoff 1991).

Robinson et.al. (1994) included in her measurement of the psychological contract such perceived obligations as rapid advancement, training, and career development. These obligations give the organization the possibility to engage employees more in organizational activities and goal attainment.

Rousseau and McLean Parks (1993) were one of the first to identify the key dimensions along which psychological contracts could be distinguished from the conventional employment contracts. They listed five dimensions which they labeled *focus*, *time-frame*, *stability*, *scope*, and *tangibility*. These dimensions found their place in Rousseau's Psychological Contract Inventory (1998; 2000), which assesses the general content of psychological contracts by measuring the contract types. The two main underlying dimensions were duration – long term and short term relations – and performance terms – specified and not specified – which composed four contract types: relational, transactional, balanced, and transitional. The contract types were measured by sub-dimensions. Relational contracts had the two sub-dimensions security (stability) and long term focus (loyalty), the two sub-dimensions of transactional contracts were short-term focus and narrow relations, for balanced contracts there were three sub-dimensions – external employability, internal advancement, and dynamic performance requirements.

Rousseau (1995) has also given some weight to a dimension concerned with performance requirements. Herriot (in Anderson, Schalk, 1998) has criticized Rousseau's approach, pointing out that her approach does not take into account changes in the career ambitions of employees (which may occur disconnected from

changes in the organization context). Guest (1998) proposed considering the dimension of agency, which may range from individual to collective.

More detailed distinctions of underlying dimensions were given by McLean Parks et al. (1998). *Focus of the contract* concerns the aspects that are important to the person – is the contract solely economic, or are the social-emotional needs also fulfilled. The relational dimension emphasizes social exchange and interdependence; while transactional emphasizes the concrete content of the contract. *Time-frame* refers to the length of the contract. *Stability* concerns the nature of the agreed tasks – is the agreement stable and inflexible, or is it flexible and dynamic. *Scope* reflects the influence of work on the identity and self-esteem of the employee. *Tangibility* defines the responsibilities of employees.

Morrison and Robinson (1997), in their longitudinal study, used obligation-specific assessment and developed seven scales for measuring employer obligations for the study. These seven themes were: enriched job, fair pay, opportunities for growth, advancement, sufficient tools and resources, supportive work environment, and attractive benefits.

One of the recent works focusing on the exchange nature of the employment relationship was carried out by Shore et al. (2006). They developed measures of perceived social and economic exchange that are continuous. The developed scales in the study were designed to reflect the conceptual distinction between the two exchange forms. The underlying dimensions were trust, investment, duration, and the financial/socio-emotional aspects of exchange.

The different lists of dimensions rise the question of are the dimensions equally important. The most probable answer is no. The content of psychological contracts is formed in terms of what employees seek and what employers offer. The importance of different dimensions can differ in accordance with organization's business strategies and human resource policies, the terms of exchange and individuals ability to make contributions.

Employees may have varying degrees of economic and social exchanges with their organization, and each of these exchange processes may have a unique influence on psychological contract content. This suggests that the type of job, as well as perceptions of the labor market, may be important for understanding the content of psychological contracts that underlie the exchange relationships. These issues should be explored in future research.

1.8. Breach of the psychological contract

Social exchange theory posits that employees seek to enter and maintain a fair and balanced relationship between themselves and their employer (Homans, 1961). One of the fundamental principles of the psychological contract is that the purpose of a contract is the production of mutual benefits. To hold up positive and constructive employment relationships, employees make contributions to fulfill

their part of the contract and expect the organization to do its share and fulfill its obligations. The psychological contract operates as a standard against which the employee assesses the employment relationship – whether the present employment situation is consistent with the standard. When employees perceive a discrepancy between what they were promised and what they receive from the organization, psychological contract breach occurs (Rousseau, 1995; Morrison and Robinson, 1997). Contract breach represents an imbalance in the social exchange relationship between the employee and employer. Generally employees are motivated to restore balance in the employment relationship after contract breach has occurred. They do it by various means, including negative workplace attitudes and behaviors: employees often reduce their commitment to the organization and reduce their effort or quality of work (Robinson et al. 1994; Turnley et al. 2003).

In today's dynamic organizational operating conditions, psychological contract breach is seen as occurring relatively frequently, and the violation of the contract is more a norm rather than an exception (Robinson and Rousseau 1994; Rousseau 1995). Previous research suggests that a majority of employees often perceive that their organization has failed to adequately fulfill the contract. The cause lies in many factors that can affect the employment relationship.

Breach is suggested to be the main way of understanding how the psychological contract affects the feelings, attitudes and behaviors of employees (Conway and Briner 2005). There is empirical evidence obtained by different studies that contract breach is associated with reduced job satisfaction (Robinson and Rousseau 1995), reduced organizational trust and decreased in-role performance (Robinson 1996), reduced organizational commitment (Coyle-Shapiro and Kessler 2000), and reduced willingness to engage in organizational citizenship behavior (Robinson and Morrison 1995; Turnley and Feldman 1999; Coyle-Shapiro and Kessler 2000). The results of a quite recent meta-analysis done by Zhao and colleagues (2007) confirm the earlier results and in addition found that perceived violation mediates relations between breach and such work attitudes as job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intentions, and that these attitudes are related negatively to such behaviors as in-role performance and organizational citizenship behavior.

Psychological contract breach is a reactive process that is based on an individual's perceptions of organizational obligations not met within the contract terms. Psychological contract fulfillment is the opposite of breach. The perception that one's psychological contract has been breached is an inherently subjective phenomenon, as is one's psychological contract. In some cases it may arise from a real breach of contract and in other cases it is much less clear whether a real breach occurred. In most cases it is hard to tell whether a promise was actually broken or even whether a promise was ever given and an obligation ever established.

Morrison and Robinson (1997; Robinson and Morrison 2000) identified two root causes of perceived psychological contract breach: renegeing and incongruence. Renegeing is when agents of the organization recognize that an obligation exists but knowingly fail to meet that obligation and incongruence is when the employee and organizational agents have different understandings about whether a given

obligation exists or about the nature of a given obligation. One quite common reason why renegeing may occur is that the organization is unable to fulfill a particular obligation. When circumstances change, then obligations that were created at one point in time may become difficult to fulfill. In addition to the organizational side, renegeing also has an individual side. It occurs not only when an organization is unable to fulfill promised obligations, but also when organizational agents are unwilling to fulfill promised obligations (Morrison and Robinson 1997). This can happen when the employee is not meeting performance expectations and not maintaining his/her side of the agreement; organizational agents may view renegeing as justified and behave accordingly (MacLean Parks and Smith, 1997).

McFlaren Shore and Tetrick (1994) propose that there exist several potential types of organizational breaches. Triggers for organizational breach may be rooted in an organization's inability to meet obligations regarding organizational justice (Andersson, 1996). Distributive breach occurs when outcomes are perceived to be unfairly distributed, for example training and merit pay. Procedural breach refers to the perception of an unfair application of procedures through which outcomes are allocated, such as a promotion or layoff. A final aspect of organizational justice is interactional justice. Interactional breach is linked to an employee's perception of the quality of interpersonal treatment during the implementation of a procedure and occurs if an employee feels he/she has been treated badly. It concerns trust in one's superiors and in the organization as a whole.

Incongruence is the case when the employee holds beliefs about a given obligation or set of obligations that differ from those held by agents of the organization. Three primary causes of incongruence are the degree to which the employee and employer hold different perceptions about employment obligation, the complexity and ambiguity of the perceived obligations between them, and lack of sufficient communication regarding obligations (Morrison and Robinson, 1997).

One of the causes of perceived breach may be the power difference between employee and employer. The ability of the weaker party to directly communicate their interests may be constrained. Power differences impact the employee's willingness to share information with the employer about one's personal preferences. Psychological contracts emerge from information exchange and negotiation, but if the information isn't exchanged on equal terms then promises made or perceived aren't based on real needs, demands and possibilities. The accuracy of shared information is one of the key factors that affect the competency of parties to participate in the formulation of realistic psychological contracts. Shared understandings about mutual obligation give the parties the same frames of reference in making judgments about the fulfillment of obligations and keeping promises.

There is also a third factor that contributes to perceived contract breach and this is employee vigilance. Vigilance is defined as the extent to which the employee actively monitors how well the organization is meeting the terms of his or her psychological contract (Morrison and Robinson, 1997). According to Morrison and Robinson (1997), vigilance is related to three factors: uncertainty, which often

motivates individuals to monitor for information; the amount of trust underlying the employee-organization relationship; and the potential costs of discovering an unmet promise. Trust is assumed to be the strongest factor affecting employee vigilance. Trust refers to expectations or beliefs regarding the likelihood that another's future actions will be favorable, or at least not detrimental, to one's interests (Gambetta 1988). The lower the employee's trust in the employer, the more likely he/she is to expect that the employer will renege on promises. Past experiences of psychological contract breach make employees less trusting of their current employer and make them more vigilant. Vigilance is also influenced by the employee's employment alternatives. When an employee has few employment alternatives he/she will be less vigilant, which will decrease the likelihood of a contract breach being perceived. Employees with many employment alternatives will feel less threatened by the perception of a breach and the perception of a contract breach may be viewed as valuable, rather than threatening information (Robinson and Morrison 2000).

Turnley and Feldman (1999) suggest that an employee's perception of a breach of the psychological contract will be influenced by three main factors: the sources from which the employee has derived their expectations, the nature of the specific contribution in which a discrepancy has been noted, and the characteristics of a discrepancy. According to Turnley and Feldman (1999), sources of an employee's expectations can include the employee's perceptions of the organization's culture and common human resource practices. Morrison and Robinson's (2000) study confirmed these assumptions. They found that employees were more likely to perceive that their psychological contract had been breached when their organization had been performing poorly, when they had not experienced a formal process of socialization, and when they had little interaction with members of the organization prior to being hired. Employees were also more likely to perceive a contract breach when they reported their own performance as low, if they had experienced psychological contract breach in prior employment relationships, and if they had numerous employment alternatives at the time of hire. An individual's own performance can be part of the organizational actions that lead to contract breach. Usually poorly performing employees don't see themselves as having any responsibility in the organizational breach of contract, although one's own poor performance may cause changes in the organization's reactions toward him/her.

Morrison and Robinson (1997) made a distinction between psychological contract breach and psychological contract violation. They define psychological contract breach as the cognition of having received less than what was promised by the organization, and psychological contract violation as the negative emotional state that may follow breach. According to that, the level of emotional response will determine if the breach becomes a violation.

The individual will experience an affective response to the perceived discrepancies, which arises from an interpretation of the organization's actions and how the organization treats the employee and his/her co-workers. Not all perceived discrepancies become breaches, and not all breaches are assessed as contract

violations (Anderson and Schalk 1998; Morrison and Robinson 1997; Turnley and Feldman 1999). Whether the perception of a breach leads to an emotional reaction and the intensity of that reaction depends on the meanings an employee attaches to the perceived breach. A variety of factors influence the level of affective response, such as the size of the loss as well as the history and current state of the employment relationship.

How strong the employee's reactions will be to discrepancies between promises made and obligations fulfilled by the organization depends on several factors. The severity of discrepancy, the type of violation, the degree of assessed organizational responsibility for the unmet obligations (McFarlane Shore and Tetrick 1994), and how fairly the employee was treated immediately preceding and following the perception of the contract breach (Robinson and Morrison 2000) are the main factors that affect employee reactions.

The perceived size of the discrepancy influences employee reactions to contract violation. Employees constantly assess the organization's actions in terms of what contributions they believe the organization has promised to deliver. When no discrepancy is perceived, the psychological contract remains in a steady state. If a discrepancy is perceived, the employee will determine its potential impact and size. Discrepancies with a potential positive impact that are smaller in size may lead employees to attempt to restore the contract, primarily reorientating one's own actions. In the case of larger discrepancies that have a negative impact, the employee's reactions could be quite intense. If the potential negative impact falls outside the limits of acceptable change, then the discrepancy is considered a 'breach' (Turnley and Feldman 1999).

Employee reactions to psychological contract breach are usually influenced by contract type. The reaction to a contract breach that is primarily pragmatic (transactional) may be less intense than the reaction to the contract breach of a more relational contract, which relies on mutual trust (Robinson et al. 1994). Transactional contracts include a narrow set of clearly defined obligations and therefore transactional contract breach is relatively unambiguous (the organization clearly did or did not fulfill its obligations). Relational contracts, on the other hand, entail a relatively more pervasive, comprehensive and renegotiable set of obligations and therefore relational contract breach is more sensitive to subjective judgments and social construction (McLean Parks & Kidder, 1994; Rousseau & McLean Parks, 1993).

The third factor concerns accountability. Employees make attributions of responsibility for unmet obligations. Morrison and Robinson (1997) suggest that renegeing may occur either as an intentional decision to break promises or as an unintentional by-product of contextual circumstances (inability to fulfill the obligation). If a person perceives that an organization breaks the psychological contract voluntarily (intentional renegeing), then the feelings about injustice may be stronger than when a person doesn't believe the organization to be fully responsible for the violation of contract (unintentional by-product of contextual circumstances) (Robinson and Morrison 2000).

Psychological contract breach is heavily influenced by perceived interactional fairness. Unfair treatment communicates to the employee that his/her performance is not valued and he/she is not respected in the relationship (Brockner and Wiesenfeld, 1996). This kind of information intensifies negative feelings, which in turn makes stronger the relationship between psychological contract breach and the feeling of violation. When a person feels he/she is being treated disrespectfully, the level of the organization's responsibility is very important, and the opposite is the case if a person feels that he/she is fairly treated. They care less about the organization's level of responsibility and therefore that emotion has a weaker impact on the reaction to the contract breach.

There is some evidence that when employees breach their obligations, this leads employers to reduce their obligations to the employee (Coyle-Shapiro and Kessler 2002). Employers' experiences with psychological contract breach committed by their employees have been studied very little. In their research, Nadine and Williams (2012) focused on small businesses in which the employer is easily identifiable as the "other" party to the psychological contract. The critical incidents technique was used to explore the managers' reactions. The results of that study revealed that the acts of violation committed by employees presented a serious challenge to the dynamics of exchange relationships, prompting a shift to a more formal management style and a move from relational to transactional elements in the psychological contracts. Managers engaged mainly in two kinds of activities: to maintaining their credibility as a good employer in the eyes of all of their employees and making explicit norms, which had been transgressed. Changes made by employer based on one employee's behavior can be a contract breach for others.

Lewicki and Bunker (1996) have outlined three effects of breach on the employee-employer relationship. They have identified: relationship restoration, relationship recalibration, and relationship rupture. When the employment relationship is strong enough to withstand the contract breach and the effects of breach have little or no effect on the employment relationship, then relationship restoration can emerge and the psychological contract remains unchanged. In the situation of relationship recalibration, the relationship will to some extent be changed after the perceived breach. The state of the psychological contract changes and the nature of the relationship become more transactional; there will be a recalculation of contract terms. Relationship rupture refers to a significant change in the nature of the employment relationship, leading to strong feelings of violation. Psychological contract violation may result in a number of attitudinal and behavioural responses and most of them are negative.

1.9. The second party of a psychological contract

Although M.D.Rousseau (1995) in her earlier works offered a one-sided view of the psychological contract, emphasizing an individual's perception of the contract,

which makes it unnecessary to consider the second party of the contract, in her later works (2005) she emphasized the importance of mutuality. Other researchers have argued that if the psychological contract is to be viewed as an exchange relationship, then it is important to consider both parties to the relationship.

Different researchers agree on the notion that a person can't have a relationship with an organization like that. This means that some possibilities must exist to build relationships. To have a relationship with it, a person tends to personify an organization. In a process called anthropomorphism, a person attributes the organization with human-like qualities. Levinson et al. (1962) was the first who argued that employees view the actions and responses of agents of the organization as actions of the organization itself. Unfortunately very little research has been done to examine whether employees personify the organization and in which form this process occurs (Coyle-Shapiro and Shore 2007). There is some evidence in organizational support theory and research that a person attributes malevolent or benevolent intentions to the organization. It is assumed that this is done based on organizational policies and practices (Shore and Shore 1995; Aselage and Eisenberg 2003). To personify an organization, an employee has to attribute organizational policies and practices to organizational representatives or agents. This is more likely to occur when employees perceive that organizational representatives or agents act in accordance with the organization's needs and interests.

The employer's perspective is held by key agents, such as line managers or senior managers, or through characteristics of the group or organization, such as its culture (Conway and Briner 2005). The role of the wider organization in an employee's life is to set the context (Johns 2006). The mission statement, strategy, structure, human resource management practice, and espoused values and norms set the framework for employment relationships (Shore, Tetrik and Taylor 2004). The enactment of the framework and the meaning that is attributed are mediated by formed relationships (Asforth and Rogers 2012). Social exchange theory maintains that trust is an essential condition for the establishment and maintenance of interpersonal relationships. Therefore individuals seek to enter and maintain fair and balanced exchange relationships. In work organizations, employees seek a fair and balanced exchange relationship with their employers.

An organization can be a party to the employment relationship through agents that represent the employing organization. Organization support theory assumes that a representative's actions are believed to be sanctioned and promoted by the organization, as opposed to being seen as idiosyncratic motives of the agent (Eisenberger et al. 2004). Eisenberger and his colleagues (2002; 2004) have found that the higher the status the employee believes the organizational agent has within the organization, the more the employee attributes the actions of the agent to the intent of the organization. The perceived status of the agent is influenced by the agent's formal position in the organizational hierarchy. The actions of high-status employees are seen as conveying the favorable or unfavorable stand toward employees of the personified organization. The organizational agent's status would

be influenced by the extent of the positive valuation and significance assigned to him/her by the organization (Eisenberger et al. 2002). An assumption is made in employee-organization relationship literature that managers, as organizational agents, act in accordance with the organization's interests and therefore it is assumed that managers enact their role as an organizational agent.

Some researchers (Porter et al. 1998; Coyle-Shapiro and Kessler 2002) have focused on middle or senior managers, assuming that they take the role of the representative of the organization. In a way, research findings of organizational support theory support the middle or senior manager's role as the representative of the organization. Eisenberger with his co-authors (2002) found that the effect of the perceived support of the supervisor on perceived organizational support was greater when the immediate manager had high status, as he/she was seen to more fully represent the organization. But again, Brandes et al. (2004) found that relationships with one's supervisor and with workers in other areas had a greater impact on employee involvement and extra-role behavior than did relationships with the organization and top management. Rousseau in turn argues that it's not important whom the employee perceives as the representative of the organization from the managerial hierarchy. And Guest and Conway (2000) make a notion that managers need to perceive themselves as representing the organization in order to be considered as representatives. A considerable number of authors propose that an employee's immediate manager is likely to play a substantial role in shaping an individual's psychological contract (Rousseau 1995; Shore and Tetrick 1994; Linden et al. 2004).

Faced with such complexity, the response from many researchers has been to use supervisors or immediate managers as representatives of the organization (e.g. Herriot et al., 1997; Guest and Conway, 2002; Lester et al., 2002).

Researchers (Tekleab and Taylor 2003) assume that in a dyadic exchange relationship, the employee's immediate manager is the one to act as the representative of the organization. Senior managers and human resource specialists determine employment relationships at the strategic level (e.g. pay, career development, job security) (Coyle-Shapiro and Shore 2007), but the immediate manager is the most salient day-to-day agent of the organization, who executes its strategy. The relationship with the immediate manager contains elements over which he/she is the direct contract maker and may facilitate the fulfillment or breaking of the terms of more distal exchange relations (eg, with senior managers) (Coyle-Shapiro and Shore 2007).

Immediate managers influence employment relations with direct supervision. Managers are responsible for assigning tasks, monitoring performance, providing feedback, and many other things. They help employees fulfill their roles and tasks and in so doing link individuals to the organization. Pre-employment experiences, recruitment practice, and newcomer orientation and training provide an employee with a general notion of the employment relationship, but only through direct supervision does one's employment relationship take specific form. Notion of what one is expected to do and what kind of support and rewards one will receive

become clear through interacting with one's immediate manager. And the extent to which the employee and manager have a common understanding of the psychological contract is positively associated with employee performance (Dabos and Rousseau 2004).

Agency theory suggests that there should be relatively little variations in how different agents of the organization structure and implement employment relationships with employees. The role of the agents is to put into practice formalized contracts that lay out clear expectations for the behavior of the employee (Shore, Porter and Zahara 2004). But this is not always the case. It cannot be assumed that all agents within the organization would interpret the strategy and expectations of the organization in the same way. By enacting the organization via their role as agent of the organization, managers put into play their perspectives on what the organization is all about and how it should work. Managers don't enact organizations only via their role, but may have their own agendas and interpretations (Coyle-Shapiro and Shore 2007). And that means that how a manager enacts the organization shapes how it is seen by the employees.

A manager's role as an agent of the organizations depends on implemented strategies. In a more dynamic approach to employment relationships, managers are expected to design employment relationships in a way that these promote the development of employee commitment to the employer. These relationships are individualized and depend not only on who the employee is, but also on the specific requirements of the organization. These relationships have to be sufficiently flexible to meet the changing needs of the organization. On other occasions the implemented strategy could be more firm, and then variations in employment relationships are smaller. Under these circumstances it is not the agent's role to deviate from the formalized and standardized contract format. In more flexible forms employee influence on the employment relationship is stronger, and in more standardized forms of employment relationships the agent's influence is stronger (Shore, Porter and Zahara 2004).

The most obvious point to make in relation to such research is that supervisors and managers are themselves employees. The potential conflict created by their position has been noted by Hallier and James (1997b), who suggest that managers may be unwilling to act as surrogates for the employer, because doing so may be seen as conflicting with their formal obligations or even their personal interests. Just as employees may see themselves as victims of employer contractual violations, so too can managers (e.g. Millward Purvis and Cropley, 2003; Crossman, 2002).

1.10. Measuring psychological contracts

Although Robinson and Wolfe Morrison (1997) already ten years ago pointed out the problem of measuring psychological contracts, these problems are still topical today. They declared that an ideal assessment of psychological contracts must

adjust to two competing demands: specific idiosyncratic information versus standardized assessments generalizable to other persons and settings.

Two approaches can be used to measure psychological contracts: the *unilateral or bilateral approaches*. In the *unilateral view*, the psychological contract is an individual belief system of the mutual expectations and obligations in the context of an employment relationship. This belief system shapes the established employment relationship and governs one's behavior. The unilateral view limits the psychological contract to an intra-individual perception, referring to the employee's perspective on mutual expectations and obligations (Rousseau, 1990). The employer's perception of the employment relationship has long been neglected, and has received increasing attention in recent years (Coyle-Shapiro and Kessler, 2000; Guest and Conway, 2002; Tekleab and Taylor, 2003).

The *bilateral view* on psychological contracts considers the contract to be the whole of the employer's as well as the employee's perceptions of the exchanged obligations (Levinson et al. 1962; Herriot & Pemberton, 1995). A bilateral approach is useful in organizational settings, for example, by clarifying differences in perspectives between employees and supervisors, which could resolve organizational conflicts and improve organizational performance (Freese and Schalk 2008).

The unilateral approach is commonly considered better, as psychological contract by definition is an individual perception and influences behavior.

As psychological contracts are mental models they in the nature are subjective, but formed in a broader context. On the other hand, they are more specific than other social mental models, as these models are formed in organization and work context. The long history of research in organizational matters (e.g. culture, climate, relations) have shown that many features are generalizable, having meaning across individuals and situations. Whether the research emphasizes the idiosyncratic or generalizable aspects or both is a function of two features: the focus of the research question and the stability of the context in which the contract occurs (Roussesu and Tijoriwala 1998).

Rousseau and Tijoriwala (1998) have classified the research done since in the domain of psychological contracts. According to them, the measurement of contracts has taken three forms: content-oriented, feature-oriented and evaluation-oriented.

Content-oriented research

Content measures look at the content of the contract, including its terms and the inter-relationships among terms, nominal classifications. These measures capture the idiosyncratic nature of the terms and the content of the psychological contract. They measure specific obligations based on promises made by the employee and the employer. Psychological contracts may contain hundreds of items, which can be very specific for a certain organisation or person, and therefore it is difficult to develop a standardized measure to study the content of psychological contracts.

These measures aren't stable over time and they are hard to cross-validate when comparing across populations. These measures also have the problem of generalizability.

Feature-oriented research

This area is perhaps the least developed of the three facets. Feature-oriented measures compare the contract to some attribute or dimension – is it implicit/explicit or stable/unstable over time (Parks and Van Dyne, 1995). Features are especially important in developing our understanding of the processes. The feature-oriented approach permits one to measure properties that are conceptually independent of specific contract terms (Rousseau, Tijoriwala 1998). The feature approach describes general characteristics of employment relationships. It does explain why different groups of employees perceive different obligations and inducements. It does not explain what these different obligations and inducements are (Freese and Schalk 2008).

The features of contracts are shaped by the nature of the larger working environment and conditions and affect the content and likelihood of fulfillment of the psychological contract. The nature of the relationship between the employee and his/her employer may be linked to specific contract features.

Evaluation-oriented research

Evaluation-oriented research assesses the degree of fulfillment, change or violation of psychological contracts experienced within the context of the employment relationship, applying individual judgements of actual organizational experiences to the contract itself.

Evaluation-oriented measures of psychological contracts have primarily been operationalized using two methods. First, a measure of contract fulfillment has been employed as a more global measure of overall contract fulfillment and second, a dichotomous index of violation (Robinson and Rousseau 1995) has been used to reflect a single event or a particular episode within the employment relationship.

When focusing upon more broadly generalizable features across persons and situations, the research is done in the etic framework, where general constructs are assessed. These constructs are derived mainly from theories. The theory-oriented approach to psychological contract assessment did not attempt to capture the full content or array of features characterizing psychological contracts. Theories give rise to standardized categories that are assessed across persons and settings (Roussesu, Tijoriwala, 1998).

Standardized measures of the content of psychological contracts are typically used when research focuses on theory testing and generalizability and quantitative measures are preferred when the instrument has been designed to capture the changes in the contract over time (DelCampo 2007). Standardized assessments of psychological contract content and features implicitly presume that contract terms

have the same meaning over time and that changes in work arrangements can be captured with existing methodologies.

Most of the research done on theoretically derived aspects of psychological contracts tend to measure contract violation, fulfillment, change and state (Barksdale, Shore, 1997).

Questionnaire surveys are the most commonly used method to examine the psychological contract (Conway and Briner 2005). Freese and Schalk (2008) have outlined criteria that ideal measures of psychological contracts should meet. The criteria they used were based on general principles for assessing content and construct validity for scale development in psychological measurements. **First**, a psychological contract measurement has to be theory-based or inductively developed. **Second**, a psychological contract measurement should assess mutual obligations/promises. **Third**, the psychometric properties of the psychological contract measurement and the appropriateness for the sample have to be assessed. **Fourth**, the evaluation of the psychological contract has to be assessed for separate items. Global measures of fulfillment or violation have to consist of multiple items to ensure the reliability of the measure. **Fifth**, in the evaluation of the psychological contract it should be assessed whether a certain item is important. In addition, the evaluation should be direct. **Sixth**, violation of the psychological contract has to be distinguished from fulfillment and from contract breach.

A complete psychological contract measurement needs to be manifold: it needs to include perceived organizational obligation, perceived employee obligation, a breach and violation scale, and a global assessment of fulfillment or violation (Freese and Schalk 2008).

PART 2. THE EMPIRICAL STUDY

2.1. The propositions for empirical analysis

Four propositions were formulated for the study because the empirical part of this study is of an exploratory nature and the research is not based on previous models.

2.1.1. The impact of individual characteristics on the formation of psychological contracts

Psychological contracts are subjective in nature and each individual holds his/her different perception of mutual obligations under the contract (Robinson et al. 1994). Differences can arise from employee perceptions and personal needs at a certain point in time. PC is likely to vary across groups of individuals within and across organizations (Herriot and Pemberton 1997). Gender, age, and education level are among the most fundamental groups to which individuals can belong and being a member of these groups may have a sound influence on a person's perceptions, attitudes, and performance (e.g.Hall 1994; Williams and O'Reilly 1998).

In post-industrial societies, work has changed in ways that permit women to work in organizations on an equal basis with men (in an increasing number of occupational roles that require attributes characteristic to male stereotypes). But despite this, work behavior is not influenced only by work roles, but also by gender roles. The expectations associated with gender roles act as normative pressures that foster behaviors consistent with gender-typical work roles (Eagly 1999; Eagly and Johannessen-Schmidt 2001). The influence of gender roles is not only external – most persons have to some extent internalized these gender roles (Ely, 1995) as part of their individual self-concept and personality (Feingold, 1994; Wood et al., 1997) and acquired dispositions that foster such behaviors. Research on work values and attitudes have established that gender may impact individuals' perceptions of the workplace and reactions towards the employing organization, as men and women prioritize different things in their work-life.

Different individual's abilities, competences and experiences are age-related. Workers who can scan a work situation and appropriately adapt their behavior to cope with changing needs are more successful. Kanfer and Ackermann (2004) have presented a model which explains how age-related changes affect motivation and work outcomes and show changes over lifespan. Several studies have showed positive relations between age and job satisfaction and a negative relation with turnover (Warr 1994). Age appears to be the most powerful demographic predictor of counterproductive behavior; older workers engage less in this kind of behavior (Lau et al. 2003).

In the context of continuously changing work, continuous learning, and the increasing need for individuals to initiate career-enhancing activities, an individual's age can be a factor that determines the perception of work realities. And as the workforce is aging, it is important to understand the role of age in the workplace and its impact on shaping PC.

Taking into account the fact that employees are increasingly claiming control over their working reality (Guest, Oakley, Clinton and Budjanovcanin 2006), and organizations face an increase in idiosyncratic deals, it can be expected that there will be no single vision of a preferred psychological contract.

Proposition 1: Preferred forms of employee psychological contracts will differ based on gender, age, and education level.

2.1.2. The role of context variables in the formation of psychological contracts

Changes in work aren't equal. Lower-skilled jobs have changed less in amount and quality. Employees are increasingly claiming control over their working situations and conditions (Guest et al. 2006), but lower-skilled jobs don't permit the same kind of freedom and responsibility as high-skilled jobs. As psychological contracts are individualized and job-based, one should find differences in PC between work status groups. Specific components of PC are at first formed in the recruitment process, then adapted and refined through work and organizational experiences (Rousseau 2001). In addition, PC is influenced by HR practices such as performance management and assessment, compensation and benefits, and training (Guzzo and Noonan 1994; Rousseau and Greller 1994).

Organizational tenure has been considered a quantitative indicator of work experience. Due to a longer stay in an organization, an employee can develop a wider set of work skills and become more knowledgeable about the organization as a whole (Bird 1996). Rousseau (1989) has argued that the longer the relationship duration between employee and employer, the broader the array of contributions and inducements that may be involved. Quinones et al. (1995) found a positive relationship between organizational tenure and core task performance. The number of years employees spend in an organization is an important factor in many job-related issues (Ng and Feldman 2010) and may affect different performance behaviors in different ways. Longer organizational tenure can increase an employee's person-organization fit or align an employee's interests more closely with organizational goals, thereby raising performance through higher levels of individual motivation (Bretz and Judge 1994). Employees with longer tenure are likely to be motivated to be strong performers because their personal career success and job security depend on the continued success of the organization in which they are embedded (Mitchell et al. 2001).

Features of the organizational context are likely to affect the formation of PC. The size of an organization is a control variable in this research. Smaller organizations tend to have less bureaucracy, less organization and less complexity and can respond more quickly to new opportunities and threats (Carlsson 1999; Kuratko et al. 2001). Small businesses typically have fewer rules and more flexible working conditions; there are more personal relationships in small organizations and relationships are more formal in large organizations (Hill and Wright 2001). But small organizations usually can't provide the same benefits that large organizations can. Working for a small business can give an employee much wider exposure to job functions, but in a large company a worker has more chances to specialize and more fully develop a specific expertise or job function (Mazzarol 2003). Large companies give more opportunities to grow.

The nature and requirements of work in different sectors and the labor market associated with each sector might affect the perception of mutual obligations. A relatively stable public sector and more volatile private sector might lead to different PCs.

Proposition 2: The strength of both employee and employer perceived obligations are influenced by organizational context variables, as work organization plays a fundamental role in establishing and shaping psychological contracts.

2.1.3. Work values and the meaning of working as strong antecedents of psychological contracts

The dynamic nature of the social context in which organizations have to operate and persons to perform today has raised the possibility that values, social norms and beliefs systems are playing a more influential role than previously in shaping the attitudes and behavior of individuals and organizations towards the employment relationship (Ashmos and Duchon 2000; Burr and Thomson 2002). A meta-analysis (Low, Yoon, Roberts, & Rounds, 2005) has shown that work attitudes are fairly stable from early adolescence to early adulthood and this implies that, similar to personality traits and abilities, work attitudes are likely to have effects on the paths people follow over the course of their work life. Thus it is possible to draw conclusions about differences in the workplace.

Values have a major influence on person's behavior and attitudes and serve as guidelines in all social situations (Schwartz 1992, 1996). Values differ from each other in terms of the type of motivational goals they express and are relevant for understanding a person's motivation (Locke 1991; Meglino and Ravlin 1998). Work values are seen as expressions of basic values in the work setting (Ros et al. 1999). Most definitions of work values agree with the notion that work values are specific goals that the individual considers important and attempts to attain in the work context and that underlie the individual's ideas of what is important to them when making occupational or organizational choices. Nord et al. (1990) has

defined work values as the end states that guide an individual's work-related preferences that can be attained through the act of working. Values have crucial role in shaping the meanings people get from their work (Brief and Nord 1990b) and are also shaped by a person's experiences at work (Locke and Taylor 1990). Recent studies show (Collins and Porras 1994; Cartwright and Holmes 2006) that there is a growing number of employees who want their work to be more aligned with their personal values. People differ in the reasons they have for working and in the needs they want to satisfy through work. The variance of work values creates differences in the importance one attributes to working and employment relations.

They also shape the information-seeking which is the basis for pre- and post-entry expectations and therefore are important individual level factors (De Vos et al. 2003) that should be taken into account when analyzing an individual's PC. Cultural and individual work values can restrict or broaden a person's abilities to enter employment agreements and it makes it important to study how work values and other aspects of work relate to an individual's PC. Understanding the work values of different persons helps organizations appreciate how to structure jobs, working conditions, compensation packages, and human resource policies to attract and sustain employees.

The second important individual level factor is the belief a person has about the role of work in one's life. This belief can shape the meaning of work and have an impact on formation of a PC. Baumeister and Vohs (2002) state that the meaning of work is linked to positive outcomes for both the individual and the organization, including improvements in organizational performance (Neck and Milliman 1994), retention of key employees, and greater organizational commitment and employee engagement (Holbeche and Springett 2004; Milliman et al. 2003). The meaning a person gives to his/her work, which also describes one's level of involvement with work, is measured with two constructs (central to this area of research): job involvement and work centrality.

Job involvement provides a measure of the strength of an employee's psychological identification with his/her job. According to Kanungo (1982), the construct examines the extent to which employees believe their jobs are central to their lives and reflects the congruence between one's needs and the perception that the job can meet those needs. The stronger the involvement, the more meaningful the work is for a person and the more difficult it is to dissociate one's self-esteem from that job (Brown 1996). The general understanding is that people with strong job involvement are likely to put more effort into their jobs and display higher levels of in-role performance. Recent research has found that the relationships between overall performance outcomes and job involvement are weak. Brown and Leigh (1996) have suggested that the reason for this weak relationship maybe that instead of exerting a direct influence, job involvement is more likely to affect performance indirectly through other variables. This study posits that job involvement would link with performance outcomes through psychological contracts.

Work centrality is a normative belief and expresses a person's perception of how central work is compared to other domains of his/her life (family, leisure, religion,

community) (MOW International Research Team 1987). It is generally accepted that work centrality is a relatively stable attitude towards work that is not easily affected by the conditions of a particular work setting (Hirschfeld and Feild 2000). Research suggests that individuals with stronger beliefs about work centrality are likely to perceive greater meaningfulness in their work (Rosso et al. 2010) and tend to expect and demand more from work. Persons with high work centrality identify more strongly with their work roles and see work as an important or the most important aspect of life (Diefendorff et al. 2002).

Job involvement and work centrality are functions of one's past cultural conditioning or socialization. Rousseau (2001) distinguished four phases in PC formation and evolution. Work centrality and job involvement belong to the first pre-employment phase. In this phase professional norms and societal beliefs play a central role.

Proposition 3: Individual work values and the meaning of work held by a person shapes psychological contracts, having an increasing or decreasing effect on perceived obligation strength.

2.1.4. Managers' own psychological contracts shape their understanding of employees' psychological contracts

To have a full understanding of the employment relationship, one has to integrate and compare the perspectives of two parties of the relationship. As employees perceive their immediate managers as representatives of the organization (Ashford and Rogers 2012) and the formed relationships shape employees' understandings of employment relationships (including psychological contracts), it's appropriate to examine managers' understandings of psychological contracts. D.Guest (2004) has argued that a key research need is to explore the perceptions of both parties to the employment relationship in order to determine the level of mutuality in the perception of promises and obligations and their fulfillment, and the extent to which there is a shared view of the attitudinal and behavioural consequences.

Psychological contract literature suggests that employees and employers perceive the core components of employment relationships differently (e.g. Herriot and Pemberton 1995; Herriot *et al.*, 1997; Coyle-Shapiro, Kessler, 2002) which is referred to as incongruence in perceptions (Morris, Robinson, 1997).

Managers have dual roles as organizational representatives and as employees, therefore both of the manager's perspectives of the psychological contract are important. Considering how psychological contracts are formed and shaped we can assume that managers', as representatives of organization, understandings (expectations) of employee PCs may be heavily influenced by their own PCs. Understanding these kinds of differences can help managers avoid tension, conflicts and other negative outcomes caused by the perceptions of their obligations toward one another.

Proposition 4: Differences between managers' and employees' perceptions of obligations and differences between the obligations seen from managers' two different perspectives are heavily influenced by managers' own psychological contracts.

2.2. Methodology and methods used in research

2.2.1. Measures of psychological contracts

Theoretical framework

The psychological contract may contain thousands of items and the content of psychological contracts will vary across a number of factors at societal, organizational, and individual levels (Conway and Briner 2005; Dabos and Rousseau 2004; McLean et al. 1998; Rousseau and Tijoriwala 1998; Thomas, Au and Ravlin 2003). It is nearly impossible to arrive at a set of specific universal psychological contract terms to cover all situations (Collyer-Shapiro 2000). If one were to compose an instrument measuring psychological contract terms suitable to a particular organization, then comparison and replication of results across different studies and organizations becomes a problem. When using a standardized list of items to measure psychological contracts, some loss of idiosyncratic details will always result. There is a risk that standardized measures exclude items that are crucial to a particular relationship.

Rousseau and Tijoriwala (1998) (see also Freese and Schalk 2008) distinguish three forms of measurements: (1) content-oriented – examining the specific terms of the contract; (2) feature-oriented – comparing the contract to some attribute or dimension; and (3) evaluation-oriented – assessing the degree of fulfillment, change, or violation experienced within the context of the contract. A feature-oriented measurement was used in current research.

Feature-oriented measures contain content made up of common interests; needs and understandings to specific groups and items of specific interest to individuals are usually excluded from those measures. Rousseau and Tijoriwala (1998) have defined a feature-oriented assessment of psychological contract as comparing the contract to some attribute or dimension. “Its features are adjectives that characterize the summary features of the contract and the ways in which it was conveyed or interpreted” (p. 685). This approach gives the possibility of having a more holistic picture; dimensions don't focus on discrete elements or attributes and they are more generalized understandings, which permit one to study psychological contracts across persons and settings and to compare and generalize the results. Measuring psychological contracts by multiple dimensions, one can get a broader picture and can describe different obligation patterns across different employee groups.

The theoretical model used in this study is feature-oriented and psychological contracts were measured and compared over six discrete dimensions, which cover

the changes in employment relations and also include traditional understandings and expectations. Feature orientation captures more general perceived obligations. The feature-based dimensions were composed based on earlier works on psychological contracts, mostly on Rousseau and McLean Parks' (1993) (based on the works of Macneil (1985)), Hiltrop's (1996), McLean Parks and Conlon's (1995), Herriot, Manning, and Kidd's (1997), McLean Parks' et al. (1998), Rousseau and Schalk's (2000), O'Leary-Kelly and Schenk's (2000), and on Sels' et al. (2004) frameworks of psychological contract dimensions.

In order to ascertain the nature of changes occurring in the employment relationship, Roehling et al. (2000) looked at publications in both scholarly and trade journals. The frequencies yielded by their content analysis of these publications indicate that 89 percent of the scholarly journals and 79 percent of the trade journals viewed training, development, and skill development opportunities as an important characteristic of the new employment relationship. Only 6 percent of the scholarly articles and 9 percent of the trade articles identified job security as a characteristic of the new employment relationship. Guest and Conway's (2002) research among HR managers and the results showed that more than 50 percent of managers interviewed said that a firm promise had been made regarding training and development, a safe working environment, feedback on performance, and fair treatment. But more than a quarter of the interviewees said that their organization had made no promises about avoiding unreasonable demands on employees or providing reasonable job security and interesting work.

Dimension development was based on the assumption that the content of the PC is general across most types of individuals (Atkinson and Cuthbert, 2006), the context where promises emerge is the same for employee and employer, and the underlying dimensions for employee and employer obligations can be the same.

The six features of psychological contract

Time-frame refers to the length of the contract, the long- or short-term nature of the contract. It measures the perceived duration of the employment relationship. As there are almost no life-time employment relationships available, time-frame indicates whether the contract is **open-ended** or **short-term**. Long-term expresses the employee's readiness to have longer relations with one organization and indicates the extent to which they expect a long-term relationship from their employer. Short-term indicates that the employee has no obligations to remain with the organization and the employer is not obligated to future commitments.

The meaning of loyalty and commitment has changed and employees are becoming more active and independent, binding themselves with organizations through career development and advancement. Advancement can mean internal promotion. A career (in a broader sense) in an organization reflects the person's readiness to have longer relationships.

Tangibility defines the responsibilities of employees. Tangible contracts are easily observable; the terms are explicitly specified and clearly defined (McLean Parks et al. 1998). Tangible relations have specific job descriptions, clear evaluation criteria, and explicit performance requirements (Rousseau 2000). Employees take responsibility only within the framework of assigned tasks and obligations. **Intangible** relations rely on trust and have broad role definition. In intangible relations, employers encourage employees with opportunities to serve beyond their job descriptions and gain core competences across functional groupings (Hiltrop 1996).

The **stability-flexibility** dimension concerns the nature of the agreed tasks: are the agreements stable and inflexible or flexible and dynamic. **Flexible** contracts show tolerance regarding change and uncertainty (Rousseau 2000); employees are open and eager to respond to changing conditions. Flexibility is associated with an employee's ability to make decisions and act in his/her own interest. It also involves self-protection and -assertion and control over the environment. These are essential for the right to form new contracts as needed to exploit resources (skills, knowledge, time, effort, etc.) for their own benefit (Rousseau and Arthur, 1999). **Stability** is secured by interdependent relations. It involves mutual support, cooperation, and collective adaptation to the environment (Rousseau and Arthur, 1999). Stability enables access to common resources, norms and risk reduction and refers to a strict application of rules and a low tolerance level for uncertainty (Sels et al. 2004). More static psychological contracts require actual renegotiation to accommodate changing needs and established stable working conditions.

Stability is related to job security, which is the most dramatically changed aspect in employment relationships. Organizations can no longer afford employees a sense of stability and permanence within the organization. This is replaced with the need to improve the flexibility and agility of the organization (Hiltrop 1996).

The **scope of relations** measures the boundaries between an employee's work and personal life (McLean Parks et al. 1998). The scope of the psychological contract varies from **narrow to broad**. It reflects the influence of work on the identity and self-esteem of the employee. Narrow scope refers to an economic relationship: the job is perceived as a means to achieve an end (Millward and Herriot 2000). Little extra-role behavior and low job involvement are also characteristic. Based on agency theory, in a narrow scope of exchange with an employee the manager puts into practice formalized contracts that lay out clear expectations for behavior and performance (Coyle-Shapiro and Shore 2007). Broad scope shows concern for and readiness to contribute from both parties. Psychological contracts that are broad in scope involve an employee's identity and self-esteem being derived from the employment relationship (McLean Parks et al. 1998; Guzzo et al. 1994) and more open social relations and readiness to cooperate with co-workers. Employees want to feel valued and be personally recognized for their contribution to the success of the organization (Hiltrop 1996). Organizational support is expressed in the extent to which the organization values an employee's contributions and cares about his/her performance and well-being and fulfills the employee's socio-emotional

needs (Eisenberger et al.1986; Rhoades and Eisenberger 2002). The relationships are highly individualized.

The focus dimension is considered to measure the extent to which the employee is **engaged with organizational** or **individual concerns**. If employees are more engaged with organizational concerns, loyalty, conformity and identification are characteristic to their behavior, while when more engaged with individual concerns, development, growth, learning and employability are common topics. The essential idea of employability is that workers continually enhance their knowledge, skills and experience to ensure that they maintain and if possible enhance their attractiveness in the labour market (Guest 2000). While the modern working situation stresses an employee's initiative to enhance one's employability, organizations are expected to provide resources and the context in which to facilitate the development of employability.

An employer's focus on socio-emotional concerns includes honesty, respect, identification, opportunities for learning and growth, and the like (McLean Parks et al. 1998). To support employee learning and self-development, an organization has to design jobs in ways that employees' skills will be enhanced and access to other tasks and assignments will be facilitated (Hiltrop 1996). To keep their promises, companies have to switch incentives from careers, promotion and status to personal reputation, teamwork and challenging assignments (Kanter 1994).

Contract level measures **equal treatment** and **volition** rate. It refers to the degree to which employees perceive their contracts to be individually versus collectively regulated (Sels et al. 2004). McLean Parks et al. (1998) proposed that *volition* is one of the dimensions that address the extent to which workers perceive that they have voluntarily participated in defining the nature and terms of the psychological contract. It refers to the input and control the employee perceives to have in the process of the formation of the deal. M.D.Rousseau has identified these individually negotiated contracts by employees as I-Deals (Rousseau, Ho and Greenburg 2006).

From the employer's point of view, it determines how much in decision-making processes they rely on power and hierarchy, apply collective agreements, and treat employees equally or empower the workers, giving them more responsibility and opportunity in job crafting. A more collectively regulated employment relationship implies agreements for and similar treatment of all employees, inducing a feeling of collective identity. Empowerment is the process of passing authority to individuals at lower levels in the organizational hierarchy (Wellins et al., 1991) to increase their rights to decide (Bowen and Lawler 1992) and allow employees to take responsibility in their own activities (Pastor 1996). Employers can have more commitment from employees by giving them more discretion, control and other resources in their work to take initiative and make decisions to solve problems and improve performance (Paul et al. 2000).

The questionnaire

To measure psychological contracts a multi-item self-scoring questionnaire was developed (Appendix A). The measure was developed for the current study and included 61 items. The psychological contract questionnaire consists of two parts – each of the six dimensions was operationalized (making the dimensions measurable) in terms of employee and employer obligations. Each of the six dimensions was considered to be bipolar. In most dimensions the developed items focus on one pole. It was assumed that a high score on these items excludes the opposite pole. Six scales represent the opposite sides of dimensions.

The psychological contract self-scoring questionnaire assesses a person's subjective beliefs about his/her own (employee) and his/her employer's obligations regarding a particular employment relationship. In the first part of the questionnaire the respondent had to measure his/her beliefs in terms of the employee's obligations to the organization, and in the second part the respondent had to measure his/her beliefs regarding the employer's obligations to the employee.

Assessing the items in the first part, the respondent had to follow the given instruction: "Consider your relationship with your current employer and define to what extent have you taken the following obligation toward your employer. Please assess each item using the following scale: 1- Not at all; 2- Slightly; 3- Somewhat; 4- Moderately; 5- To a great extent".

Assessing the items in the second part, the respondent had to follow the given instruction: "Consider your relationship with your current employer and assess to what extent your employer should have the following commitments or obligations to you. Please assess each item using the following scale: 1- Not at all; 2- Slightly; 3- Somewhat; 4- Moderately; 5- To a great extent".

The state of the psychological contract was measured by two variables: employee trust in the employer and the perceived extent to which the psychological contract has been fulfilled. Psychological contract fulfillment was measured from two perspectives – the employee's and the employer's. Items to measure PC fulfillment were adapted from Rousseau and Tijoriwala's (1998) work. Employer fulfillment ($\alpha=0.72$) of PC was measured with two items: "Overall, how well does your employer fulfill its obligations to you", and "In general, how well does your employer live up to its promises." Employee fulfillment ($\alpha=0.71$) of PC was also measured with two items: "Overall, how well have you fulfilled your obligations to your employer" and "In general, how well do you live up to your promises to your employer". Participants had to indicate the extent to which they believed their employer and they themselves had fulfilled the terms of the psychological contract. Responses were made on a 5-point scale (1 = not at all; 5 = to a great extent).

Researchers have argued that trust plays an important role in psychological contracting. Rousseau (1989) treats trust as a necessary antecedent of all psychological contracts. Employee trust in the employer was measured on a twelve-item scale adapted from Psychological Contract Inventory (Rousseau, 2000). In PCI the state of a psychological contract was measured by three separate

scales: mistrust, uncertainty and erosion; each consisting of 4 items. Respondents were asked to use 5-point scale (1 = not at all; 5 = to a great extent) to measure to what extent they agree with the statements. Factor analysis in this study revealed only one factor ($\alpha=0.93$, 12 items) including 12 items.

2.2.2. Measures for background, content, and work-related attitudes

Work values were measured with a 34-item questionnaire. The questionnaire was devised to measure six types of work values, which were composed on the basis of D.Elizur's (1984; Elizur et al. 1991; Sagie et al. 1996) work value component facet analysis. Facet analysis permits one to map and locate variables in a multidimensional space. The advantage of Elizur's theoretical approach to work values lies in the construct, which permits one to measure values not by content but by dimensions, which makes the results comparable. Elizur (1984) distinguished between two basic facets of work values: (a) modality of the work outcome – the outcomes can be instrumental, cognitive or social-affective; and (b) system-performance contingency – whether the outcome is contingent upon performance (reward); an employee has to earn them and they are usually provided after task performance or upon membership in the organization, which is earned merely through membership in the system. Most of the items were derived from previous work value instruments and research studies. (e.g. Sagie and Elizur 1996; Elizur 1996).

Respondents were asked to indicate the importance they attach to each of the items listed, using a six-point Likert scale ranging from (1) “not at all important” to (6) “to a great extent important”.

The meaning of working was measured by two scales. Job involvement ($\alpha= 0.75$, 6 items) is conceptualized here as the degree to which one psychologically identifies with one's job and therefore is one's motivational orientation to the job. Work centrality ($\alpha=0.82$, 6 items), is mostly defined as individual beliefs regarding the degree of importance that work plays in their lives (Walsh and Gordon, 2008). It determines how one acts both at the workplace and outside of it (Alvesson, Ashcraft and Thomas 2008). These two scales were taken from a MOW survey (1987, 1995).

Career success was measured in subjective terms by two items ($\alpha=0.969$). The focus was on individual satisfaction with the career and how well it has satisfied personal goals (Greenhaus et al. 2003). The items were measured on a 5-point scale ranging from 1- extremely unsatisfied to 5 - extremely satisfied and 1- hasn't met at all to 5- has met completely.

Job satisfaction can be defined as “a positive or negative evaluative judgment of one's job or job situation” (Weiss and Cropanzano 1996). Job satisfaction is a function of the perceived relationship between what one wants from his/her job and what one perceives it as offering (Locke, 1969). Job satisfaction ($\alpha=0.71$) was measured by two items: “Overall, how satisfied are you in your job” and “How

satisfied are you with your workplace?” and was measured on a 5-point scale ranging from 1- extremely unsatisfied to 5 - extremely satisfied.

Individual and contextual characteristics were measured. They included gender, age, education level, organizational tenure, job tenure, sector, position in organization and the size of an organization.

Age was coded into 6 age groups: 1- younger than 20 years, 2 - 20-29 years, 3 - 30-39 years, and 4 - 40-49, 5 - 50-59 years and 6 - 60 years and older.

Education was measured by 5 levels: 1- basic education, 2 - secondary education, 3 - vocational (vocational post-secondary) education, 4 - higher education, 5 - degree (master’s and doctoral degree).

Sector was measured in three categories: 1 - public sector, 2 - private sector, and 3 - non-profit organizations.

Position in an organization was measured by 5 work status groups: 1 - workers, 2 - specialists, 3 - supervisors (first level managers), 4 - managers (middle managers) and 5 - senior managers (includes also organization managers). Respondents were asked to identify themselves by the given descriptions.

Worker group consist of unskilled and low-skilled workers, no difference was made between blue or white collar workers (e.g. manufacturing, hospitality, catering, sales).

Organizations by their size were divided into 4 groups: 1 - micro-entities (up to 10 employees), 2 - small organizations (11-50 employees), 3 - medium size organizations (51-200 employees), and 4 - big organizations (more than 201 employees).

2.3. The first study

2.3.1. The sample and procedure

Questionnaires were delivered in two ways. First, potential respondents were contacted by students at Tallinn University of Technology who were attending psychology courses. All students received a briefing on the content of the questionnaire and were instructed how to introduce it. If respondents agreed to participate, the standardized questionnaire was delivered. This face-to-face administration was chosen to increase response rates and because it made it possible to contact potential respondents all over Estonia. Every student had to deliver six questionnaires: three women and three men in three age groups - younger than 30, 31 to 50 and older than 50 years. Participating in the research was part of organizational psychology course requirements and students were given credit points for completing the task.

Questionnaires were delivered in stamped return envelopes and sent back to the researcher by post. The second way of taking contact with potential respondents

was in different continuing education courses where the author participated as a lecturer. Mostly the questionnaires were completed in groups, in classrooms where courses were held, and filled questionnaires were handed over to the author.

From 2500 delivered questionnaires 2246 were returned. The return rate was 86.8%. Questionnaires that weren't fully completed were not included in the sample.

The sample consisted of 2173 individuals who worked on a full-time basis and returned fully completed questionnaires. All respondents assessed employee and employer obligations from the employee perspective – as they perceived their own and their employer's obligations toward them. 49.8% of respondents were male. The mean age of the sample was 35.2 (SD=12.8) years. 1.8% of respondents had basic education, 23.1% had secondary education, 25.0% vocational education, 46.8% higher education, and 3.4% had a degree. The mean organizational tenure was 5.87 (SD=6.39) years and mean job tenure was 15.34 years (SD=12.10). A total of 36.1% of respondents were employed in public sector organizations, 57.1% in private sector and 6.8% in non-profit organizations. The composition of the sample in work status grouping is as follows: 25.6% workers, 48.6% specialists, 9.1% supervisors, 12.0% managers and 4.7% senior managers. 15.7% of sample respondents worked in micro-entities (up to 10 employees), 30.3% worked in small organizations (11-50 employees), 28.3% worked in medium-size organizations (51-200 employees), 25.7% in big organizations (more than 201 employees).

2.3.2 The results of the first study

Psychometric properties of psychological contract dimensions

The scales for measure were formed as the result of exploratory factor analysis. Consistent with the definitions of the six psychological contract features, 51 items were designed to measure employee obligations and 54 items were designed to measure employer obligations. The construction of reliable scales was conducted in two consecutive steps. In the first step the Principal Axis Factoring (PAF) method was used to extract factors from the original correlation matrix (uses squared multiple correlation coefficients placed in the diagonal as initial estimates of the communalities; these factor loadings are used to estimate new communalities that replace the old communality estimates in the diagonal during iterations). PAF was selected as this method is considered the best if the researcher is interested in recovering all relevant factors (de Winter and Dadou 2012). The conceptual approach involved in PAF (i.e., trying to understand the shared variance in a set of x measurements through a small set of latent variables - factors) is convenient for factor analysis in the behavioral and social sciences. Varimax with Kaiser normalization method was used for factor rotation. A varimax rotation is most often used in factor analysis that maximizes the sum of the variances of the squared loadings. Suggested by Kaiser (1958,) it is a popular scheme for rotation, which cleans up the factors as follows: "for each factor, high loadings (correlations) will result for a few variables; the rest will be near zero". Described statistical method

was used to obtain the initial factor solutions for employee and employer obligations separately.

Exploratory factor analysis was done twice, for items measuring employee obligations and for items measuring employer obligations. Factor analyses revealed 9 factors for employee obligations. Rotation converged in twelve iterations explaining 49.35% of variance). Eight factors were revealed for employer obligations. Rotation converged in sixteen iterations explaining 56.14% of variance. One factor from employee obligations was dropped and not used in further analysis. This factor consisted of only one item. Items with loadings above 0.40, with low crossloadings and with theoretical meaningfulness, were retained to construct scales (Hatcher 1994).

For the selected items, factor analysis (Principal Axis Factoring with varimax rotation) was done a second time. Factor analyses revealed eight factors for employee obligations. Rotation converged in eleven iterations explaining 58.97% of variance). Eight factors were revealed for employer obligations. Rotation converged in fourteen iterations explaining 65.82% of variance. All factors met the selection criteria of eigenvalues greater than 1.0, with the inclusion of at least four items. Internal consistency of the scales was assessed by calculating Cronbach's alpha coefficients. Items that were found to reduce the alpha coefficients of the factors were also eliminated. In final analysis, psychological contracts were measured with a 61-item questionnaire. Six dimensions in employee obligations reached the acceptable level of Cronbach's alpha coefficient (the lowest value of $\alpha > 0.70$) (Nunnally 1978) and two were lower ($\alpha = 0.665$ and $\alpha = 0.607$). All alphas were acceptable for employer obligation dimensions. The final pool of items for both – employee and employer obligations and factor loadings for equamax rotation – are reported in Appendix A. Factor structures for both perceived obligation sets were well conceptually interpretable. Table 1 and 2 present the descriptive statistics of dimensions for both employee and employer perceived obligations.

Eight scales in Table 1 present perceived employee obligations. Career in organization contains 3 items, represents the time-frame dimension and assesses the strength of how the employee felt obligation to stay with and have his/her career in the organization (e.g. "I feel obligated to have my professional career in the/one organization"). The second scale, Explicitly defined relations, contains four items and measures the extent to which the employee felt obligated to perform specified (well controllable) tasks and in the boundaries of clearly defined responsibilities (e.g. "I feel responsible only for me assigned tasks"). The dynamic performance scale represents the flexibility side of the flexibility-stability dimension. It contains four items and measures the employee's perceived obligation to be tolerant to changes in the organization and to respond to changing conditions by changing one's own habits and behavior (e.g. "I agree to perform the new tasks and challenges"). Two scales represent the Scope of relations dimension. Both scales represent the broad side of scope dimension.

Table 1. Alpha coefficients, mean scores and correlations between employee obligations

Employee obligations	Alpha	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Career in org. (time-frame)	.791	3.21	.739								
Explicitly defined rel.s (tangibility)	.786	2.75	.851	-0.08*							
Dynamic performance (stability)	.713	3.52	.601	0.36*	-0.24*						
Personal contribution (scope)	.665	3.53	.594	0.29*	-0.29*	0.47*					
Social relations (scope)	.726	3.86	.543	0.20*	-0.13*	0.34*	0.39*				
Enhancing employability (focus)	.745	3.26	.680	0.44*	-0.09*	0.36*	0.35*	0.22*			
Focus on org. needs (focus)	.801	3.12	.756	0.37*	-0.37*	0.39*	0.43*	0.25*	0.36*		
Volition (contract level)	.607	3.76	.556	0.28*	-0.08*	0.33*	0.30*	0.29*	0.36*	0.33*	
Trust ^a	.925	2.15	.875	-0.02	0.28*	-0.09*	-0.15*	-0.12*	-0.00	-0.12*	0.00

* $p < .001$

^a trust is measured by mistrust, uncertainty and erosion of relations, negative results indicate the strength of trust in employers. The smaller the mean score the lower the level of mistrust and supposedly higher the trust.

The Personal contribution scale consists of four items and assesses the degree to which the employee feels obligated to make personal contributions that are important for them, reflecting more individual behavior (e.g. “I agree to complete tasks that exceed my responsibilities that are necessary for the organization”). The Social relations scale also consists of four items and represents the employee's perceived obligation to have open and supportive social relationships and to cooperate with co-workers, reflecting more collective behavior (e.g. “I share my knowledge and information with my co-workers”). The Focus dimension was also divided into two scales representing the opposite sides. Enhancing employability consists of four items and represents the employee side of the dimension. It measures to which extent the employee feels obligated to continually enhance his/her knowledge, skills and experience to maintain his/her competitiveness in the labor market and the focus is on individual needs (e.g. “I continuously build my skills to increase my employability level”). Focus on organizational needs contains four items and represents employees' perceived obligations to be engaged with organizational concerns and be loyal and conformal; organizational needs are at the forefront (e.g. “I feel obligated to deal with organizational problems also outside working hours”). The last scale, Volition, represents the Contract level dimension. The scale consists of three items and measures the employee’s strength of perceived obligations to participate in defining the nature and terms of one’s own working conditions (e.g. “I feel the obligation to clearly express my needs and what is important to me in my work”).

Table 2. Alpha coefficients, mean scores and correlations between employer obligations

Employer obligations	Alpha	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Long-term relations (time-frame)	.848	3.40	.797								
Spec.d working terms (tangibility)	.844	3.47	.796	0.31*							
Stable working cond.s (stability)	.880	3.60	.794	0.49*	0.44*						
Flexibility (stability)	.876	3.28	.785	0.42*	0.32*	0.51*					
Organizational support (scope)	.889	3.29	.839	0.39*	0.26*	0.43*	0.47*				
Employee centrality (focus)	.864	3.33	.799	0.39*	0.29*	0.44*	0.52*	0.41*			
Empowerment (contract level)	.818	3.30	.783	0.42*	0.24*	0.44*	0.55*	0.48*	0.49*		
Equal treatment (contract level)	.823	3.19	.862	0.33*	0.43*	0.46*	0.41*	0.43*	0.35*	0.37*	
Trust ^a	.925	2.15	.875	-0.27*	-0.17*	-0.31*	-0.27*	-0.25*	-0.22*	-0.24*	-0.18*

* $p < .001$

^a trust is measured by mistrust, uncertainty and erosion fo relations, negative results indicate the strength of trust in employers. The smaller the mean score the lower the level of mistrust and supposedly higher the trust.

Table 2 presents eight scales of perceived employer obligations. The Long-term relations scale represents the Time-frame dimension, consists of four items, and measures the extent to which the employee perceives his/her employer to be obligated to ensure long-term involvement and support with career opportunities (e.g. “The employer considers important and contributes significantly to the maintenance of permanent staff”). The Tangibility dimension is represented by the Specified working terms scale. The scale consists of four items and measures employer obligations to define and specify tasks and state clearly the employee’s rights and responsibilities (e.g. “The employer considers with employee’s needs only within the context of defined rights and responsibilities”). The Stability-flexibility dimension was divided into two scales representing the opposite sides. The Stable working conditions scale consists of four items and measures employer obligations to establish stable (static) working conditions for employees and to stick to prior agreements (e.g. “The employer provides a sustainable job and stable employment”). The Flexibility scale also consists of four items and measures employer obligations to be flexible in applying agreements and creating conditions for coping with changes (e.g. “The employer supports the staff in dealing with changes”). The fifth scale, Organizational support, consists of four items and represents the Scope dimension. This scale measures the extent to which the employer is obligated to treat employees as individuals and value and personally recognize them for their contribution to the success of the organization (e.g. “The employer is responsive to employee concerns and takes into account the individuality of employees”). The Focus dimension is represented by the Employee centrality scale. The scale consists of four items and measures the employer’s obligations to support employees learning and self-development (e.g. “The employer provides development opportunities, helps to increase employee’s employability”).

Table 3. Inter-correlations among individual background variables, context variables and the employee obligations scales.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Gender	1.00														
Age	0.07**	1.00													
Education	0.00	0.13**	1.00												
Position in org.	-0.17**	0.20**	0.32**	1.00											
Org. tenure	0.07**	0.49**	0.05*	0.14**	1.00										
Sector	-0.12**	-0.06*	-0.10**	0.04	-0.12**	1.00									
Size of the org.	-0.01	-0.07**	0.10**	0.03	-0.02	-0.22**	1.00								
Career in organization	-0.08**	-0.19**	0.04	0.14**	-0.09**	0.02	0.01	1.00							
Explicitly def. relations	-0.01	0.06*	-0.20**	-0.35**	-0.03	0.03	0.05*	-0.08**	1.00						
Dynamic performance	0.00	-0.12**	0.08**	0.23**	-0.12**	0.00	0.02	0.36**	-0.24**	1.00					
Personal contribution	-0.01	0.01	0.12**	0.27**	-0.05*	-0.02	0.01	0.29**	-0.29**	0.47**	1.00				
Social relations	0.08*	0.04	0.04	0.09**	0.00	-0.06*	0.05*	0.20**	-0.13**	0.34**	0.39**	1.00			
Enhancing employability	-0.02	-0.11**	0.13**	0.18**	-0.07**	0.00	0.01	0.44**	-0.09**	0.36**	0.36**	0.22**	1.00		
Focus on org. needs	-0.08**	0.03	0.16**	0.40**	.02	0.02	-0.05*	0.37**	-0.37**	0.40**	0.43**	0.25**	0.36**	1.00	
Volition	0.00	-0.01	0.09**	0.19**	-0.04	-0.04	0.01	0.28**	-0.08**	0.33**	0.30**	0.29**	0.36**	0.33**	1.00

* p< .01; ** p> .001

Table 4. Intercorrelations among individual background variables, context variables and the employer obligations scales.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Gender	1.00														
Age	0.07**	1.00													
Education	0.00	0.13**	1.00												
Position in org.	-0.17**	0.20**	0.32**	1.00											
Org. tenure	0.07**	0.49**	0.05*	0.14**	1.00										
Sector	-0.12**	-0.06*	-0.10**	0.04	-0.12**	1.00									
Size of the org.	-0.01	-0.07**	0.10**	0.03	-0.02	-0.22**	1.00								
Long-term relations	-0.04	-0.06*	0.09**	0.13**	0.02	0.00	-0.02	1.00							
Spec. working terms	0.04	0.06*	0.00	-0.03	0.02	-0.02	0.03	0.31**	1.00						
Stable working cond.	-0.02	0.00	0.06*	0.05*	0.02	-0.02	-0.04	0.50**	0.44**	1.00					
Flexibility	-0.03	-0.04	0.09**	0.10**	0.03	-0.02	-0.03	0.42**	0.32**	0.51**	1.00				
Organizational support	-0.02	-0.05*	0.05*	0.04	0.01	0.00	-0.10**	0.40**	0.26**	0.43**	0.47**	1.00			
Employee centrality	-0.05*	-0.05*	0.12**	0.12**	-0.03	-0.03	0.08**	0.40**	0.30**	0.44**	0.52**	0.41**	1.00		
Empowerment	-0.05*	-0.06*	0.10**	0.16**	-0.01	0.00	-0.04*	0.42**	0.24**	0.44**	0.55**	0.48**	0.50**	1.00	
Equal treatment	0.02	0.01	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.02	-0.04	0.33**	0.43**	0.46**	0.41**	0.43**	0.35**	0.37**	1.00

* p<.01; ** p>.001

The Contract level dimension is represented by two scales, which reflect the bipolar sides of the dimension: Empowerment and Equal treatment. The Empowerment scale consists of three items referring to the extent to which the employer has to empower the workers, giving them more responsibility and opportunity for job crafting, and is for basis for idiosyncratic deals (e.g. “The employer encourages employees to participate in the development of new job methods and procedures”). The Equal treatment scale consists of four items and measures the extent of employer obligations to treat all employees in the same way, reflecting collective agreements and norms (e.g. “The employer must treat all employees the same way”).

Analyses indicate that all employer obligations dimensions are reliable constructions of psychological contract. (Correlations between two sets of obligations are shown in Appendix C.)

Table 3 and 4 represent the intercorrelations among the variables under study.

The most salient differences in correlation patterns involve two variables – sector and organization size. They correlated negatively and weren’t significantly related to other variables. From contextual variables, position had the most relations with other background variables and with the employee obligation dimensions. Education was also significantly correlated with all variables.

Individual characteristics

A T-test was run to find differences between *gender groups* in mean scores for employee and employer obligations. The higher the mean score, the stronger the perceived obligations tend to be and presumably the stronger the influence on an individual's behavior. The test revealed smaller differences than expected. (Appendix D)

Statistically significant differences were found in three employee obligations dimensions: Career in organization, Social relations, and Focus on organization's needs. The differences appear only in the strength of perceived obligations, but not in direction. Women scored higher than men on Social relations (accordingly $m = 3.907$ and $m = 3.816$, $p < 0.000$, $t = -3.634$) and lower on Focus on organizations needs (accordingly $m = 3.053$ and $m = 3.172$, $p < 0.001$, $t = 3.412$) and Career in organization dimensions (accordingly $m = 3.146$ and $m = 3.276$, $p < 0.000$, $t = 3.837$). The differences indicate that men in their obligations are more involved in the organization than women, who are slightly more focused on social relations than men. In the set of employer obligations, differences between gender groups were revealed in the scores of two dimensions: Employee centrality (men - $m = 3.366$, women - $m = 3.289$, $p < 0.05$, $t = 2.080$) and Empowerment (men - $m = 3.333$, women - $m = 3.263$, $p < 0.05$, $t = 1.946$). On both dimensions women scored lower than men, although the differences are significant they are small. Men expect their employers to deal with their needs more than women.

More differences can be found between *education levels*. ANOVA F test was applied to compare the mean scores and find statistically relevant differences. Education level had a significant effect on all employee obligations except one. Only in the Career in organization dimension were no statistically significant differences between education levels found. Substantial differences were revealed in four obligation dimensions: Explicitly defined relations, Personal contribution (m= 3.44 – 3.70, p< 0.000, F= 8.359), Enhancing employability (m= 3.16 – 3.51, p< 0.000, F= 8.587) and Focus on organizational needs (m= 2.96 – 3.40, p< 0.000, F= 13.812). The higher the education level, the lower the mean scores on the Explicitly defined relations dimension (respondents with degree m= 2.223, respondents with basic education m= 2.879, p< 0.000, F= 21.063); on three other dimensions the results were the opposite: the higher the education level the higher the scores.

Significant differences between education level groups in employer obligations were revealed on four dimensions: Long-term relations (m= 3.31 – 3.57, p< 0.002, F= 4.243), Flexibility (m= 3.18 – 3.44, p< 0.002, F= 4.263), Employee centrality (m= 3.19 – 3.57, p< 0.000, F= 8.167) and Empowerment (m= 3.21 – 3.45, p< 0.001, F= 4.765). Respondents with vocational education and higher have scored higher on these dimensions than respondents with less education.

Employees with a lower education level had weaker employee obligations than employees with higher education and they were less demanding in regards to employer obligations. They preferred to have simple and clearly defined employment relations. They were ready to contribute only within the frames of their specified in-role tasks. A higher education level is related to strong obligations in dimensions related to individual development and success, and they felt obligated to be actively involved in determining their contract terms and explicitly expressing their needs. In return for fulfillment of their obligations, they expect their employers to provide them opportunities for development and support for managing organizational changes. They expect that their employers establish stable and long-term relations with them and treat them as individuals, valuing each employee's contributions and cares about their performance and well-being.

Differences in employee obligations mean scores between *age groups* were revealed in four obligations dimensions. The greatest differences were revealed in Career in organization, Dynamic performance and Enhancing employability. Younger respondents felt stronger obligations to stay longer and have a career in an organization (m= 3.43, p< 0.000, F= 24.219) than older respondents (40 years and older m= 3.08). They also felt a stronger need to be flexible (m= 3.62, p< 0.000, F= 9.007) and keep one's knowledge and skills on a high level (m= 3.37, p< 0.000, F= 8.116) than older respondents (accordingly m=3.42 and m= 3.19).

In the set of employer obligations, differences appeared also on four obligation dimensions. The differences were significant, but not as strong as in the means of employee obligations. Differences in perceived obligation strengths were in Long-term relations (m= 3.48 – 3.38, p< 0.01, F= 3.828), Flexibility (m= 3.45 –

3.28, $p < 0.034$, $F = 2.89$), Employee centrality ($m = 3.39 - 3.30$, $p < 0.013$, $F = 3.587$) and Empowerment ($m = 3.38 - 3.25$, $p < 0.023$, $F = 3.194$). Younger employees expect their employers to have higher obligations toward than did their older counterparts.

Younger employees tend to have stronger obligations in dimensions which are related to individual development and success. And in return they expect from their employers support for their development and to be provided employee-centered relations and flexible working environments. Older employees value more stability, explicitly defined relations, and social relations and prefer more equal treatment. The patterns of perceived obligations of older and younger employees permit one to speculate that older workers are more committed to the organization and younger employees are more committed to work or self-development.

Contextual factors

In a comparison of mean scores given by different organizational tenure groups for employee obligations, significant differences were revealed (ANOVA) only in two dimensions: Career in organization ($m = 3.26 - 3.07$, $p < .001$, $F = 4.783$), and Dynamic performance ($m = 3.58 - 3.32$, $p < .000$, $F = 7.070$). Respondents with shorter organizational tenure feel stronger obligation to behave in accordance with these obligations. Differences between tenure groups in employer obligations appeared in four dimensions. The biggest differences appeared in the Organizational support dimension ($p < .000$, $F = 5.308$). Respondents with longer tenure expected more support ($m = 3.51$) from the organization's side than respondents with shorter tenure ($m = 3.35$). Other dimensions where significant differences appeared were Long-term relations ($p < .047$, $F = 2.415$), Stable working conditions ($p < .029$, $F = 2.699$), and Employee centrality ($p < .042$, $F = 2.478$). The direction of differences are the same: respondents with longer tenure have slightly stronger expectations regarding these employer obligations.

The employment sector had an impact on the assessment of only three obligations. Differences were found in two employer obligations and in one employee obligation. Differences between sectors were revealed in Specified working terms ($p < .000$, $F = 6.590$), Equal treatment ($p < .020$, $F = 3.016$), and in employee obligations Social relations ($p < .000$, $F = 7.052$). Third sector employees, slightly more than others, expect to be treated more equally and to work by specified working terms. Private sector workers are those who value social relations more than others.

The size of an organization had even less impact on employee and employer obligation strengths. Differences were revealed in three obligations: in the employee obligations Enhancing employability ($p < .042$, $F = 2.479$), and in two employer obligation scales – Organizational support ($p < .001$, $F = 5.072$) and Employee centrality ($p < .017$, $F = 3.011$). Organizational support was more

expected in big organizations and employee centrality was more expected in small organizations.

Out of all the context variables, the one that has the strongest effect on the strength and direction of obligations is position in the organization. It is assumed that formal roles shape the nature of an employee's relationship with the employer (e.g. Sels et al., 2004) and the position influences how members experience the organization. The norm of reciprocity explains the relationship between position and employee obligations. These influences become apparent when comparing the results between the work status groups in the organization (workers, specialists, and managers). The mean scores of different work status groups for employee and employer obligations are seen in Tables 5 and 6.

Analysis of variance (ANOVA) revealed significant differences in both employee and employer obligations between *work status groups*. To specify the differences between groups, a T-test was performed.

The workers group showed significantly different assessment results compared to other work status groups on all employee obligation scales.

Table 5. Mean scores and standard deviations of different work status groups for employee obligations

Employee obligations	Workers	Specialists	Supervisors	Managers	Senior managers	Total
	M; SD	M; SD	M; SD	M; SD	M; SD	M; SD
Career in org. (time-frame)	3,016** (0.744)	3,261 (0.725)	3,353 (0.776)	3,267 (0.696)	3,481 (0.651)	3,209** (0.739)
Explicitly defined relations (tangibility)	3,147** (0.744)	2,728 (0.809)	2,643 (0.823)	2,338 (0.782)	1,910 (0.705)	2,758** (0.851)
Dynamic performance (stability)	3,359** (0.620)	3,511 (0.575)	3,613 (0.608)	3,715 (0.527)	3,912 (0.566)	3,518** (0.601)
Personal contribution (scope)	3,305** (0.611)	3,558 (0.568)	3,601 (0.589)	3,752 (0.497)	3,961 (0.446)	3,530** (0.595)
Social relations (scope)	3,763** (0.577)	3,898 (0.543)	3,905 (0.489)	3,892 (0.487)	3,980 (0.486)	3,864** (0.544)
Enhancing employability	3,064** (0.734)	3,314 (0.633)	3,295 (0.694)	3,413 (0.600)	3,567 (0.677)	3,264** (0.680)
Focus on org. needs (focus)	2,751** (0.728)	3,110 (0.687)	3,323 (0.729)	3,541 (0.605)	3,968 (0.655)	3,112** (0.757)
Volition (contract level)	3,594** (0.588)	3,781 (0.532)	3,852 (0.563)	3,912 (0.511)	3,933 (0.468)	3,755** (0.557)

** p< 0.001

Similar results on the employee obligation scales were seen for the specialist and supervisor groups; there was no significant difference between these groups on mostly all, except one, obligation scale. The only significant difference between these groups was in the Focus on organizational needs scale (p< 0.000, t= -3.409), where supervisors are slightly more oriented to the organization. Senior managers showed the strongest obligations on all but one scale. Their

mean scores on the Explicitly defined relations scale shows that this group doesn't feel to have this kind of obligation toward their employers.

Table 6. Mean scores and standard deviations of different work status groups for employer obligations

Employer obligations	Workers	Specialists	Supervisors	Managers	Senior managers	Total
	M; SD	M; SD	M; SD	M; SD	M; SD	M; SD
Long term relations (time frame)	3,236** (0.831)	3,426 (0.803)	3,639 (0.729)	3,433 (0.695)	3,683 (0.644)	3,401** (0.797)
Specified working terms (tangibility)	3,519** ± (0.746)	3,453 (0.826)	3,505 (0.858)	3,289 (0.747)	3,637 (0.731)	3,466** (0.796)
Stable working conditions (stability)	3,548** ± (0.813)	3,606 (0.813)	3,747 (0.784)	3,527 (0.678)	3,874 (0.702)	3,604** (0.795)
Flexibility (stability)	3,141** (0.829)	3,308 (0.787)	3,418 (0.750)	3,267 (0.686)	3,564 (0.633)	3,276** (0.786)
Organizational support (scope)	3,208** (0.902)	3,328 (0.822)	3,379 (0.806)	3,164 (0.777)	3,535 (0.728)	3,289** (0.840)
Employee centrality (focus)	3,094** (0.843)	3,394 (0.782)	3,528 (0.789)	3,383 (0.685)	3,571 (0.650)	3,326** (0.798)
Empowerment (focus)	3,087** (0.846)	3,346 (0.768)	3,452 (0.736)	3,369 (0.653)	3,645 (0.601)	3,297** (0.783)
Equal treatment (contract level)	3,217** ± (0.813)	3,168 (0.886)	3,283 (0.907)	3,001 (0.838)	3,477 (0.817)	3,186** (0.863)

** p < 0.001; ± differences only with managers groups

Managers feel they are committed to the organization more than other groups. They feel they are obligated to make personal contributions, have good and tight social relations, and to be oriented in their work to organizational needs. A similar result was seen in the study of Sels et al. (2004), where managers scored highest on employee scope, flexibility and time-frame dimensions. Managers also had strong obligations toward themselves, it becomes obvious, in striving to enhance one's employability. Managers seem to have stronger obligations toward their employer than they expect the employer to have toward them.

The workers group's perceived obligations are relatively weak and they also place relatively weak obligations on their employers. The strongest perceived obligations are concerned with social relations and volition. In return they expect to have stable working conditions and specified working terms.

Relationships between the antecedent variables and the dimensions of psychological contracts

To investigate the relationship between the antecedent variables and the dimensions of psychological contracts, hierarchical regression analysis was performed. Enter method was used. The variables were entered in two blocks. The first block contained background variables: gender, age, and education level. The second block contained context variables: position in organization

(work status group), organizational tenure, and sector and size of the organization. The analysis was run twice, for employee and employer obligations. The results for employee obligations are represented in Table 7 and results for employer obligations are in Table 8.

The regression results of the antecedents' influence on the dimensions indicate that of the background variables, age and education level have several significant relationships with obligation scales. *Gender* was weakly, although significantly and negatively related to two obligations: Career in organization ($\beta = -.07, p < .00$), and Focus on organizational needs ($\beta = -.08, p < .00$). These relationships indicate that women consider these obligations to be less important than men. These relationships were moderated by position when entered into the model. Position made these relations non-significant. Gender was a significant positive predictor of the mean scores on the Social relations obligation ($\beta = .07, p < .00$). This relation was also moderated by position. Position strengthened this relation ($\beta = .09, p < .00$). Position in organization mediated relations between gender and the three obligations, making these relations significant. The relation of age with Dynamic performance ($\beta = .06, p < .00$) and Personal contribution ($\beta = .05, p < .05$) were positive. Relation with Explicitly defined relations ($\beta = -.07, p < .00$), was negative.

Age explains significant variance in four obligation scales as it was significantly and negatively related to Career in organization ($\beta = -.19, p < .00$), Dynamic performance ($\beta = -.14, p < .00$), and Enhancing employability ($\beta = -.13, p < .00$) and significantly and positively related to Explicitly defined relations ($\beta = .09, p < .00$). Negative relations indicate that these obligations were more valued by younger respondents. Education was significantly negatively related to Explicitly defined relations ($\beta = -.21, p < .00$), and significantly positively related to Career in organization ($\beta = .07, p < .00$), Dynamic performance ($\beta = .10, p < .00$), Personal contribution ($\beta = .12, p < .00$), Enhancing employability ($\beta = .15, p < .00$), Focus on organizational needs ($\beta = .16, p < .00$) and Volition ($\beta = .09, p < .00$). All these relations between age and obligations and between education and obligations were moderated by position in organization as entered into the model.

Position in the organization affects the strength of the relation between education and seven employee obligations, making the relationship weaker or non-significant. This moderation effect can be explained by the fact that people on higher positions usually have a higher level of education. Position in the organization has a similar effect on age. In three occasions it makes the relationships between age and employee obligations stronger. Career in organization and Enhancing employability are important to younger employees in higher positions and Explicitly defined relations are important to older employees in lower positions. Regarding the obligation Focus on organizational needs, position in the organization acts as a mediator for age. When added into the model, a weak significant negative relationship between age and the obligation appeared ($\beta = -.05, p < .05$).

Table 7. Beta weights of significant predictors of employee obligations assessed from the employee perspective.

a	1		2		3		4		5		6		7		8		
	Step 1	Step 2	Step 1	Step 2	Step 1	Step 2	Step 1	Step 2	Step 1	Step 2	Step 1	Step 2	Step 1	Step 2	Step 1	Step 2	
Gender ^b	-.071*	-.039ns		-.074*		.062*		.045	.077*	.093*				-.084*			
Age	-.194*	-.220*	.184	-.136*		-.133*						-.129*	-.145*			-.050	
Education	.067*	.014ns	-.209*	-.105*	.101*		.119*					.147*	.090*	.161*	.048	.090*	
Position		.178*		-.364*		.274*		.287*		.112*			.190*			.396*	.199*
Org. tenure						-.105*		-.100*									-.073
Sector																	-.058
Size of the org.							.054									-.074	
R ²	.046	.072	.047	.168	.025	.092	.014	.087	.009	.025	.033	.064	.033	.169	.008	.045	
R ² change	.026		.122		.067		.073		.016		.030			.135		.037	
F change	13.156*		67.908*		34.346*		36.838*		7.613*		15.035*			75.513*		17.762*	

1- Career in org. (time-frame); 2- Explicitly defined relations (tangibility); 3- Dynamic performance (low stability); 4- Personal contribution (scope); 5- Social relations (scope); 6-Enhancing employability (focus); 7- Focus on organizational needs (loyalty) (focus); 8- Volition (contract level).

^a Only statistically significant ($p < 0.05$) standardized regression coefficients are presented; * $p < 0.001$

^b Coded as 1= male, 2= female

The results indicate that position in the organization was the only context variable that explained the variance in all employee obligations.

Non-significant or marginally significant results were found for the relationship between organizational tenure, sector, and size of the organization and most of the employee obligations. Organizational tenure was significantly negatively related only to Dynamic performance ($\beta = -.11$, $p < .00$), Personal contribution ($\beta = -.10$, $p < .00$) and Volition ($\beta = -.06$, $p < .05$). Organizational tenure acted like a mediator for gender on both occasions. The model indicates that women in higher positions with shorter organizational tenure are more ready to engage in dynamic performance and make bigger personal contributions.

Sector predicted the strength of obligations only on two dimensions: Explicitly defined relations ($\beta = .05$, $p < .05$) and Volition ($\beta = -.06$, $p < .05$). Workers in the private sector tend to have stronger obligations in the Explicitly defined relations domain and employees in the public sector took more responsibility for participating in defining the nature and terms of their psychological contracts. The relationship between the size of the organization and focus on the organization's needs dimension indicates that workers in smaller organizations tend to be more loyal to the organization.

The proposed model has low predictive power, as the percent of the overall variance explained by the predictors for every obligation was relatively low (from 3 to 13%). This means that individual and context variables aren't the strongest predictors for significant variance in employee obligation strength.

The results of regression analysis for employer obligations indicate that two variables – age and education – have the strongest influence on obligation strength and three of the proposed predictors had minimal or no impact on obligations. One of them was sector, which wasn't significantly related to any of the employer obligations, the second was gender, which was significantly and negatively related to one obligation – Employee centrality ($\beta = -.05$, $p < .05$) – but this relation was moderated by position, when added into the model. It turned the relation into non-significant. The third variable was organizational tenure, which had weak but significant relations with Long term relations ($\beta = .062$, $p < .05$), Flexibility ($\beta = .053$, $p < .05$), and Organizational support ($\beta = .052$, $p < .05$). Organization tenure is thought to be one of the strongest variables influencing employee PC. Rousseau (1989) has argued that the longer a relationship endured between employee and employer, the broader the array of contributions and inducements. In this study this statement didn't find full confirmation.

Table 8. Beta weights of significant predictors of employer obligations assessed from the employee perspective.

a	1		2		3		4		5		6		7		8	
	Step 1	Step 2	Step 1	Step 2	Step 1	Step 2	Step 1	Step 2	Step 1	Step 2	Step 1	Step 2	Step 1	Step 2	Step 1	Step 2
Gender ^b																
Age																
Education																
Position																
Org. tenure																
Sector																
Size of the org.																
R ²	.014	.031	.005	.008	.004	.008	.011	.023	.006	.023	.021	.023	.017	.042	.000	.002
R ² change	.017		.003		.005		.012		.016		.019		.025		.002	
F change	8.196*		1.264ns		2.162ns		5.759*		7.735*		9.004*		12.112*		0.862 ns	

1 – Long term relations (time-frame); 2 – Specified working terms (tangibility); 3 – Stable working conditions (stability); 4 – Flexibility (stability); 5 – Organizational support (scope); 6 – Employee centrality (focus); 7 – Empowerment (contract level); 8 – Equal treatment (contract level).

^a Only statistically significant ($p < 0.05$) standardized regression coefficients are presented, * $p < 0.001$

^b Coded as 1= male, 2= female

Age was significantly related to six obligations. On one occasion (Specified working terms R^2 change = 0.003, F change = 1.264ns) the overall model was non-significant and didn't explain the variance in obligation strength ratings. The relationship with the other five obligations was negative, which means that older employees have lower expectations regarding employer obligations than have their younger counterparts. Relationships between age and four employer obligations (Long term relations ($\beta = -.07$, $p < .05$), Stable working conditions ($\beta = -.05$, $p < .05$), Employee centrality ($\beta = -.06$, $p < .00$), and Empowerment ($\beta = -.07$, $p < .05$)), aren't simple. These relationships are reinforced by the moderating effect of the variable position in organization. Position in the organization was significantly related to four obligations: Long term relations ($\beta = .12$, $p < .00$), Stable working conditions ($\beta = .09$, $p < .00$), Employee centrality ($\beta = .13$, $p < .00$), and Empowerment ($\beta = .16$, $p < .05$.) As position has positive relations with these obligations, it means that younger workers in higher positions believe their employers to have stronger obligations toward them in these domains of obligations.

Education was another variable that was significantly related to almost all employer obligations. All the relationships with obligations were positive and a similar effect appeared as with age variable – position has a moderating effect on these relations, but the direction of influence is opposite. Position has a negative moderating effect, making the relations weaker.

The size of the organization was significantly related to four obligations. The most significant relationship was with Organizational support obligations. The relation was negative and significant ($\beta = -.12$, $p < .00$) and had a positive moderating effect on the negative relation between age and organizational support, making the relationship stronger. The relationships indicate that workers in smaller organizations expect stronger commitments from their employers in the domain of organizational support and empowerment. And in bigger organizations employees expect their employees to be more concern with employee problems and needs.

In addition to the Specified working terms obligation (R^2 change = 0.003, F change = 1.264ns), the proposed model didn't succeed in explaining the variance of mean scores in two more obligations: Stable working conditions (R^2 change = 0.005, F change = 2.162ns) and Equal treatment (R^2 change = 0.002, F change = 0.862ns). The variance on these obligations should be explained by variables outside this proposed model.

2.3.3. Relationships between work values, the meaning of working, and psychological contracts

Psychological contracts form on the basis of information the individual seeks and gets about his/her job and his/her role in it. Seeking and interpreting the information depends on an individual's goals, needs and values (De Vos, Buyens, 2005).

This fact allows the assumption that previously formed work values and the meaning of work play a crucial role in the formation of a psychological contract. As psychological contracts are subjective by their nature, the formation of a psychological contract depends on person's career goals or values because he/she will pay more attention to the information that helps to achieve these goals (Rousseau, 1995; Shore, Tetrick, 1994).

The meaning a person gives to his/her *work*, which also describes one's level of involvement with work, is measured with two constructs (central to this area of research): Job involvement and Work centrality. Job involvement ($\alpha= 0.75$, 6 items) is conceptualized here as the degree to which one psychologically identifies with one's job and therefore is one's motivational orientation to the job. Work centrality ($\alpha=0.82$, 6 items), is mostly defined as individual beliefs regarding the degree of importance that work plays in one's life (Walsh & Gordon, 2008, p. 46). These two scales were taken from the MOW survey (1987, 1995). The items in both scales for the meaning of working were measured with a six-point Likert scale ranging from 1 - not at all important to 6 - to a great extent important.

Work values were measured with 34-item questionnaire. The questionnaire was devised to measure six types of work values which were composed on the bases of D.Elizur's (1984; Elizur et al., 1991; Sagie et al., 1996) work value component facet analysis. Facet analysis permits one to map and locate variables in a multidimensional space. The advantage of this theoretical approach lies in the construct that permits one to measure work values not by content but by dimensions, which makes the results comparable. Elizur (1984) distinguished between two basic facets of work values: (a) modality of the work outcome – the outcomes can be instrumental, cognitive or social-affective; and (b) system-performance contingency – whether the outcome is contingent upon performance (reward); an employee has to earn them and they are usually provided after task performance or upon membership in the organization, which is earned merely through membership in the system. Most of the items were derived from previous work value instruments and research studies. (e.g. Sagie & Elizur, 1996; Elizur, 1996).

Respondents were asked to indicate the importance they attach to each of the items listed, using a six-point Likert scale ranging from 1 - not at all important to 6 - to a great extent important.

Psychometric properties of work values

A principal component factor analysis with varimax rotation was used to form scales. The presupposed theoretical construct for the work values questionnaire was confirmed. Factor analysis succeeded in differentiating among all the theoretically devised work value types. Factor analyses revealed eight factors (explaining 68.92% of variance). Items with loadings above 0.40 and with theoretical meaningfulness were retained to construct scales. All factors met the

selection criteria of eigenvalues greater than 1.0 with an inclusion of at least four items. Internal consistency of the scales was assessed by calculating Cronbach's alpha coefficients. Only two scales didn't reach the critical level of alpha. Items that were found to reduce the alpha coefficients of the factors were also eliminated. Factor structures were well conceptually interpretable. Table 9 present descriptive statistics of work value scales.

Table 9. Factor alphas, means, standard deviations and intercorrelations between work value scales

Work value factors		α	M	S.D.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
<i>Performance</i>	Intrinsic (cognitive)	.823	4.82	.621								
<i>Rewards</i>	Affective	.698	5.07	.734	.475							
<i>(P-R)</i>	Rewards (instrumental)	.685	5.03	.808	.264	.384						
	Autonomy (cognitive)	.727	4.56	.791	.461	.320	.246					
	Power	.823	3.72	.700	.500	.261	.165	.360				
<i>System</i>	Work variety (cognitive)	.790	4.57	1.00	.591	.407	.201	.490	.445			
<i>Rewards</i>	Social (affective)	.759	4.50	.771	.447	.400	.232	.150	.265	.365		
<i>(S-R)</i>	Work conditions (instr.)	.706	4.81	.729	.189	.418	.620	.202	.073	.118	.265	

All correlations are significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Factor analysis revealed eight distinguishable factors. Six factors match the theoretical model: three factors describe employee performance-based work outcomes which differ on cognitive, affective and instrumental bases, and three factors describe work outcomes based on organizational rewards on the same three bases. The two additional factors are Power and Autonomy. Ros et al. (1999), analyzing basic individual and work values, suggest that there should be a fourth distinctive type of work values, one that parallels the basic self-enhancement higher-order (Schwartz 1994) value type. This work value type should be concerned with prestige or power. They suggest that the items that refer to that type are prestige, authority, influence, power, and achievement in work. These are exactly the items, except achievement in work, that have composed the Power factor in this study. Power belongs to the performance rewards category. Autonomy consists of three values (independence, autonomy and flexibility), which classically belong to the intrinsic value category. This scale belongs to the performance rewards category.

The correlations between individual variables, work values, and scales of meaning of working are presented in Table 10. Individual background variables had a strong effect on the rank order of work values.

Table 10. The correlations between individual variables, work values, job involvement and the meaning of working

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Gender	1.00												
Age	0.07**	1.00											
Education	0.00ns	0.13**	1.00										
Position	-0.17**	0.20**	0.32**	1.00									
Intrinsic values (cognit.)	0.01ns	-0.15**	0.13**	0.22**	1.00								
Affective values	0.21**	-0.09**	-0.01ns	0.01ns	0.47**	1.00							
Rewards (instrumental)	0.06*	0.01sn	-0.05*	-0.07**	0.26**	0.38**	1.00						
Autonomy	-0.06*	-0.08**	0.05*	0.13**	0.46**	0.32**	0.25**	1.00					
Power	-0.16**	-0.19**	0.01ns	0.25**	0.50**	0.26**	0.17**	0.36**	1.00				
Work variety (cognitive)	-0.04ns	-0.20**	0.07**	0.15**	0.59**	0.41**	0.20**	0.49**	0.45**	1.00			
Social values (affective)	0.16**	0.04ns	0.00ns	0.06*	0.45**	0.40**	0.23**	0.15**	0.26**	0.37**	1.00		
Work conditions (instr.)	0.17**	0.08**	-0.13**	-0.18**	0.19**	0.42**	0.62**	0.20**	0.07**	0.12**	0.27**	1.00	
Work centrality	-0.02ns	0.23**	0.02ns	0.06*	0.04ns	0.04ns	0.03ns	0.03ns	0.11**	0.04ns	0.16**	0.06*	1.00
Job involvement	0.01ns	0.20**	0.12**	0.27**	0.31**	0.26**	0.07**	0.16**	0.11**	0.27**	0.34**	0.09**	0.30**

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

** Correlation is significant at the 0.00 level (2-tailed).

Differences in work values between individual characteristics

Differences in work values between individual characteristics are presented in Table 11. The largest differences were discovered between the age and gender groups. It can be assumed that age is one of the variables that defines the work value profile. There were two categories of work values where differences between age groups were insignificant. These were Rewards (instrumental P-R) values and Social values (affective S-R). Age also determined Work centrality and the scope of Job involvement. Younger respondents reported work to have more central position in their life than older respondents. Their Job involvement was also stronger. Younger respondents put more value on work conditions; in other work values they scored lower than their older counterparts. Intrinsic values, autonomy, power, and work variety were more valued by older workers.

Gender had less effect on the importance of work values than expected based on earlier works. Gender had no effect on Work centrality and Job involvement. There were also no significant relationships between gender and two work values: Intrinsic (cognitive P-R) and Work variety (cognitive S-R). Men gave higher scores to Power (accordingly $m = 3.84$, $\sigma = .99$ and $m = 3.51$, $\sigma = .97$, $p < .000$) and Autonomy (accordingly $m = 4.58$, $\sigma = .82$ and $m = 4.49$, $\sigma = .78$, $p < .000$). On other values women scored higher. Although the differences are significant, they are small to moderate.

No significant differences were revealed between education and Affective values (P-R) and values concerning Power (S-R). Rewards (instrumental P-R) (accordingly $m = 5.01$, $\sigma = .73$ and $m = 4.63$, $\sigma = .72$, $p < .000$), Social values (affective S-R) (accordingly $m = 4.43$, $\sigma = .72$ and $m = 4.28$, $\sigma = .59$, $p < .000$) and Work conditions (instrumental S-R) (accordingly $m = 4.86$, $\sigma = .71$ and $m = 4.33$, $\sigma = .72$, $p < .000$) were valued more highly by respondents with lower education levels. On other work value scales, higher mean scores were given by more educated respondents. The differences in Work centrality were significant, but weak ($m = 2.94 - 3.09$, $\sigma = .83 - .89$, $p < .035$). Differences in Job involvement were slightly bigger. Job involvement was strongest among respondents having a scientific degree ($m = 4.79$, $\sigma = .63$, $p < .000$) and weakest among respondents with basic education ($m = 4.55$, $\sigma = .66$, $p < .000$).

Significant differences emerged between position and all work values. Lower scores for Work conditions (instrumental S-R) (accordingly $m = 4.40$, $\sigma = .78$ and $m = 4.97$, $\sigma = .64$, $p < .000$) and Rewards (instrumental P-R) (accordingly $m = 4.80$, $\sigma = .74$ and $m = 5.18$, $\sigma = .92$, $p < .025$) were given by respondents in higher positions. On all other work value scales, the tendency in assessing the values was opposite. The greatest differences in mean scores were revealed in Power values (S-R) ($m = 3.44 - 4.19$, $\sigma = .64 - .77$, $p < .000$), Intrinsic (cognitive P-R) ($m = 4.54 - 5.17$, $\sigma = .70 - .56$, $p < .000$), and Work conditions (instrumental S-R).

Position also had an effect on Job involvement and Work centrality. Work centrality was stronger in the supervisor and manager group and Job involvement was stronger the higher one's position in organization.

Table 11. Descriptive statistics of work values

Work values ^a	Gender		Age		Education		Position		
	<i>female</i>	<i>male</i>	>=39	<=40	<i>up to second.</i>	<i>higher</i>	<i>worker</i>	<i>specialist</i>	<i>Manager^b</i>
<i>Performance rewards(P-R)</i>	\bar{x}	4.76	4.67**	4.84**	4.79**	4.69**	4.54**	4.79**	5.01**
	σ	0.635	0.680	0.668	0.632	0.634	0.689	0.702	0.512
	\bar{x}	5.19**	4.88**	5.00*	5.09*	5.05	5.03	4.97*	5.02*
	σ	0.611	0.823	0.785	0.687	0.751	0.717	0.707	0.834
	\bar{x}	5.19*	4.98*	5.03	5.02	5.05	5.01	5.08	4.87*
	σ	0.676	0.926	0.659	0.935	0.848	0.730	0.925	0.684
<i>System rewards(S-R)</i>	\bar{x}	4.49*	4.58*	4.47**	4.60**	4.54	4.53	4.41**	4.78**
	σ	0.780	0.825	0.805	0.801	0.795	0.825	0.827	0.761
	\bar{x}	3.51**	3.84**	3.51**	3.82**	3.65	3.71	3.44**	4.18**
	σ	0.974	0.991	1.015	0.966	1.006	0.998	1.003	0.852
	\bar{x}	4.47	4.59	4.36**	4.64**	4.53	4.47	4.33**	4.72**
	σ	0.794	0.793	0.780	0.784	0.763	0.848	0.845	0.627
<i>The meaning of working</i>	\bar{x}	4.63**	4.39**	4.53	4.49	4.56**	4.43**	4.44*	4.55*
	σ	0.678	0.773	0.733	0.736	0.739	0.721	0.765	0.665
	\bar{x}	4.98**	4.74**	4.91*	4.82*	4.87	4.86	4.97**	4.51**
	σ	0.652	0.718	0.662	0.724	0.687	0.709	0.639	0.742
	\bar{x}	2.99	3.03	3.18**	2.84**	3.05*	2.94*	2.98	3.11*
	σ	0.847	0.896	0.868	0.840	0.891	0.832	0.851	0.921
Job involvement	\bar{x}	4.68	4.66	4.78**	4.56**	4.73**	4.56**	4.42**	4.95**
	σ	0.585	0.657	0.577	0.644	0.590	0.658	0.659	0.567

t-test for Equality of Means * p<0.05; ** p<0.001

^a Work values were measured on six-point scale

^b Managers and senior managers

All these above outlined results and differences are in accordance with Krau's (1989) findings, which state that value profiles may be a function of age and socioeconomic status.

Results of regression analysis

To examine the potential influence of work values, the meaning of working, and individual background variables on psychological contract formation, stepwise multiple regression analysis was conducted. The results of the stepwise regression analysis for employee and employer obligations are presented in Table 12.

All the models were statistically significant. The weighted combination of the predictor variables explained between 26 and 43% of the variation assessed strength. This is a moderately high level of explanation and suggests that work values and the meaning of working capture some but not all of the important influences. The explanatory power of work values and the meaning of working in explaining the variances in employee obligations ranged from 15 to 3%. Low explanatory power indicates that there are other factors not included in the proposed model that exert influence. Comparing the two sets of results, it becomes apparent that perceived employer obligations are less influenced by work values, the meaning of working (Work centrality and Job involvement), and individual characteristics than employee obligations.

In regard to employee obligations, Intrinsic (cognitive P-R) values and Job involvement were making relatively larger contributions to the prediction models. Job involvement was positively related to all but one obligation – Explicitly defined relations. With this obligation, the relationship was negative. The same patterns were revealed between intrinsic values and employee obligations. Correlation analysis of values and the meaning of working indicate positive correlations between Intrinsic values and Job involvement ($r = .31, p < 0.00$) and that was the second strongest correlation, as the interrelationship between Job involvement and Social values was slightly stronger ($r = .34, p < 0.00$).

Intrinsic work values focus on the process of work—the intangible rewards that reflect the inherent interest in the work, the learning potential, and the opportunity to be creative and challenging (Ryan & Deci, 2000), and whether the worker can take responsibility for his labor (Ros et al. 1999). It is mostly a cognitive process concerning contribution made. Job involvement, however, is an individual's psychological identification or commitment to his/her job (Kanungo, 1982) and reflects the degree to which one is engaged in and concerned with one's present job (Paullay et al., 1994). Intrinsic values reflect the cognitive, and job involvement the more emotional relatedness to one's work.

Job involvement was significantly related to all employee obligations. These relations can be perceived as more general, influencing the overall strength of employee obligations. This can be interpreted as the stronger the Job involvement, the stronger the willingness to take responsibilities. Similarly, Intrinsic values were related to all employee obligations. These two constructs have created stronger relations with different obligations. Intrinsic values had the strongest relations with Dynamic performance ($\beta = .34$, $p < 0.00$) and Enhancing employability ($\beta = .32$, $p < 0.00$). Based on that, we can only speculate that these obligations are perceived to be more intellectual, as Dynamic performance was in addition positively related to Work variety ($\beta = .15$, $p < 0.00$) and position ($\beta = .11$, $p < 0.00$) and Enhancing employability was related to education ($\beta = .06$, $p < 0.00$).

Job involvement was more strongly related to Personal contribution ($\beta = .38$, $p < 0.00$) and Focus on organizational needs ($\beta = .30$, $p < 0.00$), and these obligations are more emotional. In addition, Social values ($\beta = .08$, $p < 0.00$) and Position ($\beta = .13$, $p < 0.00$) had positive and Power ($\beta = -.08$, $p < 0.00$) had negative relationships with Personal contribution. Also positively related to Focus on organizational needs were Social values ($\beta = .17$, $p < 0.00$), Power ($\beta = .12$, $p < 0.00$) and Position ($\beta = .21$, $p < 0.00$).

This relatedness of Job involvement and Intrinsic values to all dimensions of obligation indicates the need to clearly identify their multidimensional meaning when examining their influence in future research.

Explicitly defined obligations had positive relations with both instrumental values – Rewards ($\beta = .08$, $p < 0.00$) and Working conditions ($\beta = .20$, $p < 0.00$) – as well as with work centrality ($\beta = .11$, $p < 0.00$), Autonomy values ($\beta = .07$, $p < 0.00$) and age ($\beta = .11$, $p < 0.00$). Other relations were negative. Based on this we can argue that persons with strong instrumental values take responsibility for their performance only in the limited borders of formally determined tasks and obligations. And by this model they tend to be elderly workers with less education and lower employment levels.

The strength of obligations on the Career in organization dimension were influenced by performance values and not by system values. Age was related negatively ($\beta = -.20$, $p < 0.00$). Younger workers with strong performance values prefer to have longer and more meaningful relations with the organization.

Job involvement and Intrinsic values were again related to almost all employer obligations, although the relationships are considerably weaker. In addition to these, Affective and Social values have the same kind of effect on employer obligations. Social values have relationships with all employer obligations and Affective values miss two. But again the relations are relatively weak.

The other two system values – Work variety and Work conditions – were related both to only one employer obligation – respectively Empowerment ($\beta = .08$, $p < 0.00$) and Specified working terms ($\beta = .08$, $p < 0.00$). Work centrality was also related to one obligation, Equal treatment ($\beta = .06$, $p < 0.05$). Power from performance values wasn't related to any employer obligation.

Table 12. Beta weights of significant predictors of employer obligations assessed from the employee perspective.

a	E 1	E 2	E 3	E 4	E 5	E 6	E 7	E 8	O 1	O 2	O 3	O 4	O 5	O 6	O 7	O 8
Gender ^b	-.07*	-.07*					-.05		-.07*		-.07*	-.06	-.05	-.07*	-.06	
Age	-.20*	.11*	-.14*	-.06*		-.16*			-.09*	.06			-.06*	-.07*	-.08*	
Education		-.07*				.06*			.06			.06		.08*	.05	
Position		-.28*	.11*	.13*			.21*							.05	.06	
Intrinsic (cognitive)	.19*	-.11*	.34*	.25*	.21*	.32*	.18*	.29*	.11*		.09*	.11*	.08*	.15*	.16*	.07
Affective values	.07*								.10*	.06	.12*	.06	.08*	.06		.06
Rewards (instr.)	.06*	.08*				.05		.06*	.08*	.05						
Autonomy		.07*	-.06						-.06		-.07			-.09*	-.07*	
Power	.18*			-.08*	-.14*		.12*									
Work variety (cog.)		-.07*	.15*	.05				.09*				.06		.07	.08*	
Social values		-.12*		.08*	.26*		.17*	.15*	.12*	.07	.07	.12*	.13*	.07*	.12*	.06
Work condit. (instr)		.20*			.08*		-.08*			.08*						
Work centrality	.11*	.11*	.06*		-.05	.10*	.06*		.05							.06
Job involvement	.26*	-.14*	.24*	.38*	.29*	.28*	.30*	.26*	.09*		.06	.11*	.12*	.12*	.16*	
Adjusted R ²	.340	.257	.339	.366	.308	.304	.434	.363	.108	.045	.062	.111	.086	.129	.153	.026
F	120.35	50.41	120.05	153.95	138.44	116.84	179.16	212.00	23.39	18.68	16.31	34.07	30.08	25.99	38.23	13.46
p	< .000	< .000	< .000	< .000	< .000	< .000	< .000	< .000	< .000	< .000	< .000	< .000	< .000	< .000	< .000	< .000

^a Only statistically significant ($p < 0.05$) standardized regression coefficients are presented; * $p < 0.00$ ^b Coded as 1= male, 2= female

E – Employee obligations: 1- Career in org. (time-frame); 2- Explicitly defined relations (tangibility); 3- Dynamic performance (low stability); 4- Personal contribution (scope); 5- Social relations (scope); 6-Enhancing employability (focus); 7- Focus on organizational needs (loyalty); 8- Volition (contract level).

O – Employer obligations: 1-Long term relations (time-frame); 2-Specified working terms (tangibility); 3- Stable working conditions (stability); 4-Flexibility (stability); 5- Organizational support (scope); 6- Employee centrality (focus); 7- Empowerment (contract level); 8- Equal treatment (contract level).

^b Coded as 1= male, 2= female

Employees' relatedness to employer obligations was more emotional. Employees with high job involvement, a strong sense of belonging, and who value high performance expect their employers to be more strongly committed to them. In at least six employer obligations, men were more demanding than women.

When considering only work values, a similar pattern of relations appears on two obligation dimensions. Flexibility and Organizational support were both related to the same values with nearly the same strength – Intrinsic values (accordingly $\beta = .11$, $p < 0.00$, $\beta = .08$, $p < 0.00$), Affective (accordingly $\beta = .06$, $p < 0.05$, $\beta = .08$, $p < 0.00$), Social values (accordingly $\beta = .12$, $p < 0.00$, $\beta = .13$, $p < 0.00$) and Job involvement (accordingly $\beta = .11$, $p < 0.00$, $\beta = .11$, $p < 0.00$). If a person values the emotional aspects in their work, then they expect their employer to offer more support in dealing with changes and with individual needs and problems. Both dimensions have negative relations with gender; this means that men expect their employer to have stronger obligations to them on these dimensions. The Flexibility dimension was influenced by education level ($\beta = .06$, $p < 0.05$), the higher the education level the stronger the expected obligations. Organizational support was negatively related to age ($\beta = -.06$, $p < 0.00$).

The strength of the Specified working terms obligation was determined by both affective values – Affective ($\beta = .06$, $p < 0.05$) and Social values ($\beta = .08$, $p < 0.00$) – and by both instrumental values – Rewards ($\beta = .07$, $p < 0.05$) and Work conditions ($\beta = .08$, $p < 0.00$). Materialistic needs (slightly prevailing) and emotional connections determined employees' expectations of these employer obligations.

Equal treatment as an employer obligation was very weakly explained by this supposed predictor model. Its strength was predicted by Social, Affective and Intrinsic values and by Work centrality; however, the relations were weak.

Work centrality appears to be more strongly related to the employee obligation dimensions, having significant relationships with six dimensions and weak relations only with two employer obligations. Schein (1980) was one of the first authors to state that persons with high work centrality tend to believe that they are more obligated to their employers and their employers are strongly obligated to them in return. Roehling's work (2008) supported this statement. In this study, the found relationships confirm the first part of this statement – work centrality has positive impact on employee obligations – but don't confirm the second part of the statement. In this study, work centrality isn't related to employer obligations.

Although the dimensions for employee and employer obligations are the same, the value patterns influencing the importance of the obligations are different. The results indicate that employee obligations are influenced more by performance-related values but the perceived employer obligations may be influenced by emotional values, which describe more organization/collective-centered behavior.

2.3.4. Relationships between the state of psychological contracts and employment outcomes

This final section of the first study investigates the relations between **employment outcomes** and the strength of perceived obligations and the state of psychological contract (PC). The special interest is to find out the impact rate of the state of PC on two employment outcomes – job satisfaction and career satisfaction.

Guest and Conway (2002) have defined the state of psychological contract as one's evaluation of whether promises and obligations have been met, whether they are fair, and their implication for trust. In this study the state of psychological contract is measured by three variables: trust and employee and employer obligations fulfillment – extent to which the psychological contract's obligations have been fulfilled by employee and by employer. Trust here is measured in reverse way - respondents rate the level of mistrust, uncertainty and erosion of relations. Therefore a positive state reveals in negative results.

Correlation analysis (Table 13.) reveals quite strong relations between trust in employer and employer fulfillment ($r = -0.50$, $p < 0.000$). This connection is expectable. Employer fulfillment is also positively correlated with job satisfaction ($r = 0.43$, $p < 0.000$), which means that employees are more satisfied with their job the more they perceive that their employers keep their promises and fulfill their obligations. Employee career and job satisfaction were more influenced by the employer's fulfillment of its obligations, than by the fulfillment of their own obligations.

Table 13. Correlations between the job outcomes and the PC state factors

	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5
Satisfaction with career	3.52	0.99	1.00				
Job satisfaction	3.74	0.76	0.51**	1.00			
Trust	2.15	0.88	-0.27**	-0.39**	1.00		
Employee fulfillment	4.28	0.60	0.11**	0.24**	-0.15**	1.00	
Employer fulfillment	3.83	0.85	0.25**	0.43**	-0.50**	0.36**	1.00

** Correlation is significant at the 0.000 level (2-tailed)

A two-step hierarchical regression analysis was conducted to examine to what extent employment outcomes are influenced by the strength of obligations and the state of psychological contracts. Regression analyses were performed for two outcomes: job satisfaction and satisfaction with career. The analysis was run twice, for employee and employer obligations separately. In step 1, the employee/employer obligations were entered, and the psychological state characteristics were entered in step two.

The results for relations between work outcomes and employee obligations are represented in Table 14 and results for relations between job outcomes and employer obligations are in Table 15.

The results show that a psychological contract's state has significant influence on both employment outcomes. Negative relations show the influence strength of trust, as distrust and uncertainty were measured by that scale. Employee fulfillment was significantly and positively related with both employment outcomes. The more employees live up to their own standards, the higher the satisfaction with career and job.

Table 14. The results for relations between job outcomes and employee obligations and state of psychological contract

Employee obligations	Satisfaction with career		Job satisfaction	
	Step 1	Step 2	Step 1	Step 2
Career in organization (time-frame)	.058ns	.068*	.085**	.106**
Explicitly defined relat. (tangibility)	-.243**	-.204**	-.241**	-.186**
Dynamic performance (stability)	-.025ns	-.029ns	-.077*	-.088**
Personal contribution (scope)	.186**	.150**	.240**	.155**
Social relations (scope)	-.05ns	-.071**	.073**	.028ns
Enhancing employability (focus)	.081*	.100**	-.035ns	.005ns
Focus on org. needs (focus)	.067*	.053ns	.051ns	.025ns
Volition (contract level)	.019ns	.037ns	.039ns	.067**
Trust		-.137**		-.182**
Employee fulfillment		.111**		.249**
Employer fulfillment		-.007ns		.057**
R ²	.182	.221	.203	.340
R ² change	.040		.138	
F change	31.681, p< .000		128.042, p< .000	

A psychological contract's state also has a moderating effect on *employee obligations*. Explicitly defined relations and Personal contribution have the strongest relationships with both satisfaction forms. Explicitly defined relations have negative relations with satisfaction with career ($\beta = -.243$, $p < 0.00$) and with job satisfaction ($\beta = -.241$, $p < 0.00$). Its importance was suppressed by PC state when added into the model. This indicates that an employee's satisfaction with his/her job and career are higher if he/she has an employment relationship with the employer based on trust, as the opposite for Explicitly defined relations are relations

which are based on trust and broad role descriptions and allow over-role behavior. Personal contribution was positively related to both satisfaction forms, with satisfaction with career ($\beta = .186, p < 0.00$) and job satisfaction ($\beta = .240, p < 0.00$). And again, these relationships were moderated by the state of the PC. The more positive the state of the PC, the less important it is in shaping satisfaction with Personal contribution. Career in organization and Dynamic performance were significantly related to job satisfaction. Career in organization was positively related (step 1 $\beta = .09, p < 0.00$ and step 2 $\beta = .106, p < 0.00$) and with a positive state of PC, its influence gets stronger. People who prefer and stay longer in one employment relationship are more satisfied with their jobs. Dynamic performance was negatively related to job satisfaction ($\beta = -.08, p < 0.00$). Although it is a preferred state of behavior, it is concerned with changes and related to state of anxiety, which in its nature is a negative emotion. Satisfaction with career was significantly and positively related to Enhancing employability dimension (step 1 $\beta = .06, p < 0.00$; step 2 $\beta = .10, p < 0.00$), which is quite obvious, as keeping one's skills and knowledge on a high level supports any kind of career. Career in organization supports satisfaction with career only when the PC state is positive. The better the state of the PC, the less important social relations are in relation to career satisfaction with one's career.

Focus on organizational needs and employer fulfillment of made commitments had no relation to either satisfaction form.

Job satisfaction was influenced more by self-centered employee obligations. Job satisfaction was high if these obligations were strong (Personal contribution and Career in organization) and the state of the PC was positive. In addition, strength of obligations on Explicitly defined relations and Dynamic performance dimensions had to be weak. Satisfaction with career was primarily influenced by a person's own efforts and contributions made.

The results for *employer obligations* reveal a different pattern. In this model, Employee fulfillment of one's own obligations had no relations with job and career satisfaction. Quite important in determining the state of psychological contract was employer fulfillment of obligations. Trust in the employer was here as important as predicting the strength of employee obligations. One dimension, Flexibility, had no significant relations with career satisfaction level, and all the other seven obligation dimensions had. Long-term relations ($\beta = .171, p < 0.00$), Employee centrality ($\beta = .254, p < 0.00$) and Empowerment ($\beta = .210, p < 0.00$) related positively to career satisfaction. Career satisfaction was negatively related to Specified working terms ($\beta = -.104, p < 0.00$), Stable working conditions ($\beta = -.102, p < 0.05$), Organizational support ($\beta = -.137, p < 0.00$) and Equal treatment ($\beta = -.222, p < 0.00$). All the commitments that support an employee's individual development and enhancement raised the level of career satisfaction. The state of PC had a moderating effect on almost all relationships between career satisfaction and employer obligations. The state suppresses the positive influence of Long-term relations and the influence of negative relations with Specified working terms and Equal treatment. However, it increased the influence of Employee centrality, Empowerment and of negatively

related Stable working conditions. This can be interpreted as, in regard to satisfaction with career, the more positive and stronger the state of the psychological contract the more important employer obligations that support empowerment and include employee development are, and the less important obligations concerning collective identity and equal treatment become.

The pattern permits one to assume that in a situation of low trust, career satisfaction will depend more on the person's own strengths and efforts; he/she expects the employer to support (Employee centrality and Empowerment) him/her in his/her strivings and doesn't expect the employer to offer "organization/collective" based support.

In regard to job satisfaction, three employer obligations had formed non-significant relationships. These were Long-term relations, Stable working conditions, and Organizational support, all concerning stable, secure and collective employment terms.

Table 15. The results for relations between job outcomes and employer obligations and state of psychological contract

Employer obligations	Satisfaction with career		Job satisfaction	
	Step 1	Step 2	Step 1	Step 2
Long term relations (time frame)	.171**	.146**	.036ns	.001ns
Specified working terms (tangibility)	-.104**	-.094**	-.099**	-.099**
Stable working conditions (stability)	-.102*	-.217**	.008ns	-.158**
Flexibility (stability)	.069ns	.046ns	.195**	.159**
Organizational support (scope)	-.137**	-.161**	.057ns	.023ns
Employee centrality (focus)	.254**	.269**	.162**	.178**
Empowerment (focus)	.210**	.218**	.140**	.152**
Equal treatment (contract level)	-.222**	-.168**	-.212**	-.130**
Trust		-.185**		-.212**
Employee fulfillment		.029ns		.101**
Employer Fulfillment		.139**		.258**
R ²	.126	.197	.142	.313
R ² change	.072		.171	
F change	54.962, p< .000		153.117, p< .000	

Flexibility ($\beta = .195$, $p < 0.00$), Employee centrality ($\beta = .162$, $p < 0.00$), and Empowerment ($\beta = .140$, $p < 0.00$) had positive relations with job satisfaction and

Equal treatment was negatively ($\beta = -.212, p < 0.00$) related. This means that persons who expect their employer to support them in development, advancement, independence, and taking responsibilities and don't expect to be treated equally (but as individual personalities) presumably have higher job satisfaction.

The state of the PC influenced job satisfaction through all three state factors. Trust ($\beta = -.212, p < 0.00$) and Employer obligations fulfillment had the strongest influence, ($\beta = .258, p < 0.00$) as did employee obligations fulfillment ($\beta = .101, p < 0.00$). The state of PC again had a moderating effect on the relationships between job satisfaction and employer obligations. The most remarkable change occurred in relations with Flexibility and Equal treatment. The state of the PC suppresses the influence of these obligations, but increases the influence of Employee centrality and Empowerment obligations. If the state of the PC is high and positive, then Empowerment and Employee centrality are important predictors for job satisfaction. Also, if the state of the PC is positive, the less a person values obligations concerning Stable working conditions, Equal treatment, and Specified working terms.

The state of the PC mediated the influence of Stable working conditions. A low level of Stable working conditions influence Job satisfaction only when the state of the PC is high and positive.

2.3.5. Conclusions of the first study

The first task of the study was to develop a feature-based assessment of psychological contracts for current study. Relying on the earlier works of different authors (see page ...), six dimensions were construed and indicators identified for each dimension to capture the nature of modern psychological contracts. Two sets of items were formulated to describe employee and employer obligations. Factor analysis was run twice, for employee obligations and for employer obligations. An eight-factor solution for both obligations provided the best conceptually interpretable factor structure. Seven of the eight factors met the reliability requirements on employee obligation dimensions and all eight factors did so on employer obligation dimensions.

Seven of the proposed employee obligations were important for respondents to some extent. The rated strength of obligations was moderate. The only dimension where representatives didn't feel they had obligations to their employer was the Tangibility dimension (Explicitly defined relations). Respondents who scored high on this dimension took responsibility only within the framework of assigned tasks and obligations and were disengaged from the organization. This is a dimension where the biggest differences were revealed between different groups.

Obligations were also rated low in Focus on organizational needs. Obligations were highest in the Social relations, Volition and Dynamic performance dimensions. Correlations between dimensions were weak to moderate. The strongest positive

relationships were between Personal contribution and Dynamic performance and between Career in organization and Enhancing employability.

A somewhat different picture was revealed in employer obligations. Mean scores for these obligations were relatively weaker than given to employee obligations. But differences were statistically non-significant. This indicates that employees don't take on strong obligations and don't expect high commitment from their organization either. Obligations were highest in Stable working conditions, Specified working terms, and Long-term relations dimension. These are dimensions where employees, on their obligations, scored lowest. The Tangibility feature produced contradictory perceptions of obligations. Employees themselves are ready to take broader responsibilities and need more freedom in the work role, but expect their employers to guarantee them stable work conditions and a static work environment.

Obligations were lowest in the Equal treatment and Flexibility dimensions. Low scores in the Equal treatment dimension were consistent with their own relatively high scores in the Volition dimension, as they both represent the Contract level labeling the two ends of the dimension. Standard deviations in employer obligations are relatively small, which shows also the small variability in responses. Correlations between employer obligations were stronger than between employee obligations.

Specified working terms had weaker connections with the other six obligations than the intercorrelations between the rest of the obligations. Specified working terms correlated with Stable working conditions and with Equal treatment. It can be assumed that persons who score high in these dimensions prefer the old type of employment relationships – clearly specified work tasks with minimum responsibility and collectively regulated employment terms.

The **second task** performed in this study was to analyze the dimensions of psychological contracts and find out the connections between perceived obligations and individual background factors. Through this task, the validity of the **first proposition** was controlled, which stated that preferred forms of employee psychological contracts will differ based on gender, age and education level. The validity of this proposition was confirmed.

To complete the second, and hereinafter discussed third and fourth tasks, the obligations that constitute psychological contract were handled as dependent variables.

The analysis showed that the relationships are weaker and fewer than expected. Individual characteristics – gender, age, education – that are traditionally accounted to be the central variables influencing work outcomes, behavior, and attitudes don't shape psychological contracts with the same effect.

Gender had little influence on psychological contracts. Gender differences were revealed in three employee and in two employer obligations. The differences indicate that men in their obligations were more engaged in the organization than

women. Women were slightly more committed to social relations than men. In addition, men expect their employers to deal more with their needs than women.

The differences were greater between *education levels*. Employees with a lower education level had weaker obligations than employees with higher education and were less demanding in regard to employer obligations. Persons with less education prefer to have simple and clearly defined employment relations. A higher education level is related to strong obligations on scales referring to individual development and success, and they feel obligated to be actively involved in determining their contract terms and explicitly expressing their needs. In return for the fulfillment of their obligations, they expect their employers to provide them opportunities for development and support them in managing organizational changes, to be provided stable and long-term relations, but also to be treated as an individual.

Analysis also confirmed differences between *age groups* in assessment of the strength of obligations. Younger employees tended to have stronger obligations on dimensions that are related to individual development and success. And in return they expect from their employers support for their development and to be provided with employee-centered relations and flexible working environments. These results support life-span theory, which states that younger and middle-aged people are more focused on growth and learning (Ebner et al. 2006; Freund 2006).

Older employees valued more stability, explicitly defined relations, and social relations, and prefer more equal treatment. And again these findings were supported by life-span theory. According to this theory, older workers face an increasing loss of resources and that makes them less focused on growth and learning. It is difficult for them to acquire new resources, and losses in resources are threatened by downward spirals (Ebner et al. 2006). The patterns of perceived obligations of older and younger employees permit one to speculate that older workers are more committed to the organization and younger employees are more committed to work or self-development.

The **third task** in this study was to examine the impact of work contextual factors (organizational tenure, position in organization, size of the organization, sector) on the strength of employee and employer obligations. Performing this task permitted one to control the validity of the **second proposition**, which stated that the strength of both employee and employer perceived obligations are influenced by organizational context variables. This proposition was partly confirmed. Analysis revealed that differences in obligation strengths between working sectors, organizational size, and the length of organizational tenure were small and mostly insignificant.

Out of all the context variables, *position in the organization* had the strongest effect on the strength and direction of obligations. The workers group showed significantly different assessment results compared to other work status groups on all employee obligation scales. The workers group showed the weakest results on all obligations except Explicitly defined relations, which got higher mean scores than were given by other position groups. The workers group's perceived

obligations are relatively weak and they also place relatively weak obligations on their employers. The strongest perceived obligations are related to social relations and volition. In return, they expect to have stable working conditions and specified working terms.

Managers showed the highest mean scores, which means that managers make the strongest commitments to their organizations. They felt obligations to make personal contributions, have good and tight social relations, and act in the interests of the organization and at the same time they took strong obligations onto themselves – obviously in an effort to enhance one's employability. Managers seemed to feel stronger obligations toward their employers than they expected their employers to have toward them.

Specialists and supervisors showed similar patterns in obligations. This similarity may come from the fact that supervisors are often promoted from within and are unlikely to have formal management education. Typically the supervisor has significant experience doing the work of the individuals they supervise. The supervisor is a first-level management job and has responsibility to a higher level of management. The line manager is the one who is responsible for getting effective performance, for ensuring adequate training and development, for welfare and discipline, and for counseling.

Investigating the relationships between the antecedent variables and the dimensions of psychological contracts, the results confirmed the *importance of individual characteristics* and *position in organization* in shaping psychological contracts. Position was the only context variable that explained significant variance in all *employee obligations*. The results indicated that position acts as a moderator for relationships between education and obligations and between age and obligations. Position affected the strength of the relation between education and seven employee obligations, making the relationship weaker or non-significant. This moderation effect can be explained by the fact that people in higher positions usually have a higher educational level. Position had a similar effect on age. Career in the organization and Enhancing employability are important to younger employees in higher positions and Explicitly defined relations are important to older employees in lower positions.

Individual characteristics and contextual factors were weak predictors for perceived *employer obligations*. The proposed model didn't succeed to explain the variance of mean scores in three employer obligations – Specified working terms, Stable working conditions, and Equal treatment. Age and education level were predictors that had significant relationships with employer obligations. Age formed negative and education level positive relations. And again position had a moderating effect, but this time position reinforced the negative relationships between age and obligations. This means that younger persons in higher positions with better education expect their employers to have strong commitments toward them.

The findings confirmed position's importance – whether the employee is a lower-skilled worker, specialist or manager – in shaping employee obligations. This

assumption confirms the opinion of Milward and Hopkins (1998), who stated that a psychological contract is primarily a job-level contract, or the opinion of DeVos and Buyens (2005), who claim that psychological contracts are formed in the workplace.

As the explanatory power of the proposed model was weak, the *variance on employer obligations* should be explained by variables outside this proposed model. It's wise to look for broader social, economic, political and legal factors that can shape the formation of psychological contracts or the perception of obligations, as has been proposed by several authors (Rousseau 2001; Conway and Briner 2005). Still, these propositions are mostly theoretical and no significant empirical evidence is available. Some evidence about variables other than individual variables is provided by Ho et al. (2006). Their research confirmed the notion that social capital plays a key role in an organization. They provided evidence that employees' beliefs in and expectations about their employer's obligations to them are shaped by social capital.

The **fourth task** was to find out the effect of individual work values and the meaning of working on the strength of both employee and employer perceived obligations. This task provided an opportunity to control the validity of the **third proposition**, which stated that individual work values and the meaning of working held by a person shape psychological contracts, having an increasing or decreasing effect on perceived obligation strength. These two individual dispositions were studied as antecedents for psychological contract formation. This proposition was confirmed, although the strength of relationships between work values and employee and employer obligations were different and work centrality explained less than expected about the strength of perceived obligations. Work values were strong predictors for differences in the strength of employee obligations.

Significant differences in work values were found between the age and gender groups. It can be assumed that age is one of the variables that define the work value profile. Age also determined work centrality and the scope of job involvement. Younger respondents reported work to have a more central position in their life than older respondents, and their job involvement was also stronger. This explains the findings of differences in perceived psychological contract obligations. Younger employees tended to have stronger obligations in psychological contract dimensions that were related to individual development and success. And in return they expected their employers to support their development and to provide employee-centered relations and flexible working environments. Younger respondents put more value on work conditions; on other work values they scored lower than their older counterparts. Intrinsic values, autonomy, power, and work variety were more valued by older workers. Younger employees were more emotionally related to their work than their older colleagues.

Person-related *work values* explained more variances in both employee and employer obligation strengths. In regard to employee obligations, Intrinsic (cognitive P-R) values and Job involvement made relatively larger contributions to the prediction models. Job involvement was significantly related to all employee

obligations. These relations can be perceived as more general, influencing the overall strength of employee obligations. This can be interpreted as the stronger the Job involvement, the stronger the willingness to take responsibilities. Similarly, Intrinsic values were related to all employee obligations. Correlation analysis of values and the meaning of working indicate positive correlations between Intrinsic values and Job involvement ($r = .31, p < 0.00$) and that was the second strongest correlation, as the interrelationship between Job involvement and Social values was slightly stronger ($r = .34, p < 0.00$).

Intrinsic work values focus on the process of work – on the intangible rewards that reflect inherent interest in the work, learning potential, and the opportunity to be creative and challenging (Ryan & Deci, 2000), and whether the employees can take responsibility for his labor (Ros et al. 1999). It is mostly a cognitive process concerning contribution made. Job involvement, however, is an individual's psychological identification or commitment to his/her job (Kanungo, 1982) and reflects the degree to which one is engaged in and concerned with one's present job (Paullay et al., 1994). Intrinsic values reflect cognitive, and job involvement more emotional relatedness to one's work.

This relatedness of Job involvement and Intrinsic values to all obligation dimensions indicates the need to clearly identify their multidimensional meaning when examining their influence in future research.

Although the dimensions for employee and employer obligations are the same, the value patterns influencing the importance of obligations are different. Job involvement and Intrinsic values were again related to almost all employer obligations, although the relationships are considerably weaker. In addition to these, Affective and Social values had the same kind of effect on employer obligations. Social values had relationships with all employer obligations and Affective values missed two. The results indicate that employee obligations are influenced more by performance-related values but the perceived employer obligations may be influenced by emotional values, which describe more organization/collective-centered behavior. If a person values the emotional aspects in his/her work, then he/she expects the employer to offer more support in dealing with changes and with individual needs and problems. Both dimensions have negative relations with gender – this means that men expect their employer to have stronger obligations to them in these dimensions.

Employees with high job involvement, a strong sense of belonging, and who value high performance expect their employers to be more strongly committed to them.

Two findings deserve to be highlighted. Work centrality was connected only with employee obligations and didn't influence the strength of expected employee obligations. It influences only the behavior of an employee and not his/her expectations of the employer's commitments. The second finding concerns affective values (including respect, recognition, pleasurable work, appreciation), which were positively related to employer obligations and not to employee obligations. One can

assume that these values can be met through the fulfillment of the employer's obligations.

The last part of the first study investigated the influence of psychological contracts dimensions and *the state of* psychological contracts on employment outcomes. And that was the **fifth task** of the study.

The influence of the six psychological dimensions on two job outcomes – satisfaction with one's career and job satisfaction – was examined. Job satisfaction was expected to be linked to obligations that satisfy employees' need to feel comfortable in their relationship with the organization. Satisfaction with one's career was expected to be more linked to obligations concerning broad scope, flexible relations, and employability and volition. These obligations should be associated with personal control.

The state of the psychological contract had significant influence on both employment outcomes. The higher and more positive the state, the higher was the satisfaction. Differences were revealed in employer and employee obligations. When inspecting the influence of employer obligations and the state of the psychological contract on career and job satisfaction, it was revealed that employer obligation fulfillment had no influence; only the employee's fulfillment of his/her own obligations influenced the level of satisfaction with career and job. The state of the psychological contract in combination with employer obligations influenced career and job satisfaction differently. The level of career satisfaction was dependent only on the fulfillment of employer obligations and job satisfaction was influenced by both obligation fulfillments. Trust in the employer was an important predictor of satisfaction level on both occasions. The state of the psychological contract had a moderating effect on almost all relationships between career and job satisfaction and measured obligations.

From the set of employee obligations, obligations related to personal contribution, employability, development and enhancement influenced career and job satisfaction in a positive way. Satisfaction with career was primarily influenced by the positive state of the psychological contract and the person's own efforts and contributions.

All the commitments expected from the employer that supported the employee's individual development and enhancement raised the level of career satisfaction. The results could be interpreted as, in regard to satisfaction with one's career, the more positive and stronger the state of the psychological contract, the more important employer obligations that support empowerment and include employee development become and the less important obligations concerning collective identity and equal treatment become. In regard to job satisfaction, persons who expected their employer to support them in development, advancement, independence, in taking responsibilities, and don't expect to be treated equally (but as individual personalities), presumably had higher job satisfaction.

The revealed pattern permits one to assume that in a situation of low trust, career satisfaction depends more on the person's own strengths and efforts; he/she expects the employer to support (Employee centrality and Empowerment) him/her in his/her

strivings and doesn't expect the employer to offer "organization/collective" based support.

In this study *trust* was measured as one of the variables determining the state of psychological contracts. Different authors have considered trust as a central construct in psychological contract theory (Rousseau 1989; Robinson 1996; Guest 2004) that plays multiple roles: as antecedent, as a mediator of relationships between psychological contract and breach, and as a defining characteristic of psychological contracts. Roehling (2008) found that trust's role as an antecedent of psychological contracts varies depending on which side of the psychological contract – employer obligations versus employee obligations – are assessed. He found that correlations between trust and the employer's obligations were relatively smaller than the relationships between trust and employee obligations.

It is common to suppose that the less you trust someone, the less you expect them to provide things or be committed to you. In employment relationships, an employee believes that his/her employer is obligated to provide certain inducements or be committed in certain ways. The level of trust would affect the employee's assessments of the likelihood that his/her employer will actually act in expected ways and fulfill his obligations. The results of the correlation analyses involving the measures of employee and employer obligations and trust (Table 1. and Table 2.) show the differences between both employee and employer obligation sets. Trust correlated significantly higher with employer obligations and was correlated to all obligation dimensions. Greater trust in one's employer is associated with higher perceived employer obligations. Trust had the strongest relations with Stable working conditions. The interpretation of the correlations between trust and employer obligations is more complex, as the correlations don't show the direction – does greater trust lead to stronger obligations or do stronger employer obligations lead to more trust.

The level of trust in the employer has been found to be a critical factor in employee expectations and behavior. Decrease in trust causes a fall in employee satisfaction and commitment and in motivation and contribution amount (Robinson 1996). Trust deterioration results when a person perceives discrepancy between promises made and actual employer behavior (Deery, Iverson and Walshe 2006). Rousseau (1989) has argued that regarding the influence of trust on exchange relationships, employees who trust their employers tend to feel more obligated and perceive themselves as having promised to do more.

Correlations in this study between employee obligations and trust are relatively small. Somewhat stronger correlations are in four dimensions – explicitly defined relations, personal contribution, social relations and focus on organizational needs. Trust correlates positively with explicitly defined relations and that means that if employees don't trust their employers, they take responsibility and feel obligated to act only in the frames of explicitly determined job roles and work tasks. With higher trust, they feel more obligated to act more collectively, as obligations in the Social relations and Focus on organizational needs dimensions presume this kind of behavior and Personal contribution is concerned with individual efforts.

2.4. The second study

The theoretical basis for the second study is the notion that if the psychological contract is to be viewed as an exchange relationship, then it is important to consider both parties of the relationship. The concept of a contract inevitably entails two parties or at least their agents. Managers usually act as agents of the organization (Arnold 1996; Guest 1998; Guest and Conway 2002) and they communicate the strategy and expectations of employers to employees.

Two surveys were conducted to examine the differences in employee and employer obligations between employees and managers from both perspectives – managers as employees and managers as representatives of the organization.

In the first survey, all respondents assessed employee and employer obligations from the employee perspective – as they perceived their own obligations and their employer's obligations toward them. The second survey was directed at managers as representatives of the organization. Managers assessed employee and employer obligations from the employer perspective. The employee sample included 818 respondents and manager sample included 147 respondents. The same scales and items were used in both surveys.

2.4.1. The method and sample description

Psychological contract obligations were measured using a 71-item questionnaire and were measured from both perspectives – employee's and employer's obligations. The questionnaire consisted of two parts, as psychological contracts consist of perceptions of mutual obligations – each of the selected six dimensions was operationalized in terms of employee as well as employer obligations.

In the second study a refined form of the first study's questionnaire was used (Appendix B). Some items were reworded to make the meaning of the item clearer. Items were also added to strengthen the factor structure and gain structure of dimension with at least four items.

The Principal Axis Factoring (PAF) method was used to extract factors from the original correlation matrix (uses squared multiple correlation coefficients placed in the diagonal as initial estimates of the communalities; these factor loadings are used to estimate new communalities that replace the old communality estimates in the diagonal during iterations). PAF was selected as this method is considered the best if the researcher is interested in recovering all relevant factors (de Winter and Dadou 2012). The conceptual approach involved in PAF is convenient for factor analysis in the behavioral and social sciences. Varimax with Kaiser normalization method was used for factor rotation. A varimax rotation is most often used in factor analysis that maximizes the sum of the variances of the squared loadings (Kaiser 1958). The described statistical method was used to obtain the initial factor solutions for employee and employer obligations separately.

Factor analysis was done twice, for items measuring employee obligations and for items measuring employer obligations. Principle factor analyses confirmed the theoretical construct. The initial solution resulted in eight factors for employee obligations (Cumulative % 53.657) and eight factors for employer obligations (Cumulative % 57.93). Both factor structures were well conceptually interpretable. All factors met the selection criteria of eigenvalues greater than 1.0 with an inclusion of at least four items. Items with loadings above 0.40 were retained to construct scales. Internal consistency of the scales was assessed by calculating Cronbach's alpha coefficients (Table 16 and 17).

The respondents of the first survey assessed employee and employer obligations from the employee perspective. They had to assess the extent to which they have taken on obligations to their employers and to which extent their employers were obligated in return. All items were assessed with a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (certainly not) to 5 (certainly yes).

The second survey was directed at managers as representatives of the organization assessing employee and employer obligations from the employer perspective. Respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they believe their subordinates are obligated to contribute and their employer was obligated to provide in return. The same feature-based dimensions were used as in employees' survey questionnaire. All items were assessed with a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (certainly not) to 5 (certainly yes).

The employee sample consisted of 818 individuals who worked on a full-time basis and returned fully completed questionnaires. 53.8% of respondents were female. The mean age of the sample was 38.5 (SD=13.6) years. 2.6% of respondents had basic education, 22.0% had secondary education, 23.6% vocational education, 48.0% higher education, and 3.1% had a degree. The mean organizational tenure was 6.7 (SD=7.12) years and mean job tenure was 18.2 years (SD=13.44). A total of 26.2% of respondents were employed in public sector organizations, 69.8% in the private sector, and 4.0% in non-profit organizations. The composition of the sample in work status grouping is as follows: 28.9% workers, 41.7% specialists, 9.9% supervisors, 14.4% managers and 5.1% senior managers. The workers group consists of unskilled and low-skilled workers; no difference was made between blue or white collar workers (e.g. manufacturing, hospitality, catering, sales). 11.0% of sample respondents worked in micro-entities (up to 10 employees), 34.2% worked in small organizations (11-50 employees), 28.2% worked in medium-size organizations (51-200 employees), 26.6% in big organizations (more than 201 employees).

The managerial sample consisted of 147 managers working on different managerial levels. A total of 13.9% were supervisors, 51.5% were managers and 34.7% were senior managers. 44.6% of respondents were female. The mean age of the sample was 39.1 (SD=9.67) years. 7.9% had secondary education, 25.7% vocational education, 64.0% higher education, and 5.9% had a degree. The mean organizational tenure was 6.5 (SD=5.22) years and mean job tenure was 18.6 years (SD=9.23). A total of 26.7% of respondents were employed in public sector

organizations, 70.3% in private sector and 3.0% in non-profit organizations. 45.5% of sample respondents worked in small organizations (up to 50 employees), 30.7% worked in medium-size organizations (51-200 employees), and 23.7% in big organizations (more than 201 employees). 43.3% of participants managed 1-10 individuals, 16.5% managed 11-20, 18.6% managed 21-50, 7.2% managed 51-70, 5.1% managed 71-90 and 9.3% managed more than 100 individuals.

2.4.2. Results of the first survey

Tables 16 and 17 report the descriptive statistics and correlations among each of the employee and employer obligation dimensions. Correlations show significant and medium to strong relations between the dimensions. In employee obligations, Explicitly defined relations are the exception. This dimension has weaker connections to other dimensions. Dimensions that describe individualistic behavior are more strongly correlated with each other. And the same pattern is revealed between dimensions concerning more collectively oriented behavior.

Table 16. Means, standard deviations, coefficient alpha for and correlations^a between employee obligation dimensions

	alpha	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1 Career in organization	.753	3.16	0.87	1,00							
2 Explicitly def. relations	.801	2.73	0.97	0,26	1,00						
3 Dynamic performance	.689	3.94	0.64	0,44	0,24	1,00					
4 Personal contribution	.701	3.67	0.65	0,26	0,20	0,52	1,00				
5 Social relations	.727	4.07	0.55	0,39	0,29	0,52	0,42	1,00			
6 Enhancing employability	.784	3.76	0.71	0,29	0,29	0,48	0,48	0,39	1,00		
7 Focus on org.nal needs	.741	4.04	0.60	0,50	0,28	0,53	0,34	0,55	0,30	1,00	
8 Volition (contract level)	.726	3.81	0.68	0,45	0,23	0,50	0,53	0,51	0,59	0,32	1,00

^a p < 0.001

The strongest obligations respondents perceive to have toward their employer concern Social relations (m= 4.07, p< 0.001), Focus on organizational needs (m= 4.04, p< 0.001) and Dynamic performance (m= 3.94, p< 0.001). Obligations were rated low on explicitly defined obligations (m= 2.73, p< 0.001) and career in organizations (m= 3.16, p< 0.001). The first dimension reflects workers' need to have employment relations based more on trust and not so much on clear and strict terms. The second reflects employees' low readiness to form long-term relations with one organization. The readiness to make personal contributions and take responsibility for one's own employability was also relatively low.

Table 17. Means, standard deviations, coefficient alpha for and correlations^a between employer obligation dimensions

	alpha	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1 Long term relations	.678	4,13	0,59	1,00							
2 Specified working terms	.806	3,19	0,86	0,26	1,00						
3 Stable working conditions	.719	4,40	0,55	0,56	0,39	1,00					
4 Flexibility	.797	3,97	0,73	0,53	0,31	0,51	1,00				
5 Organizational support	.759	4,10	0,64	0,45	0,34	0,55	0,55	1,00			
6 Employee centrality	.823	4,02	0,72	0,22	0,33	0,52	0,55	0,55	1,00		
7 Empowerment	.786	4,02	0,66	0,22	0,29	0,21	0,53	0,23	0,52	1,00	
8 Equal treatment	.716	4,16	0,69	0,21	0,38	0,54	0,29	0,21	0,30	0,38	1,00

^a $p < 0.001$

Correlations between employer obligations are also all significant and range from weak to strong. Mean scores show that there is a small imbalance in strengths between employee and employer obligations. Obligations were higher in employer obligation dimensions than in employee obligations. That means that they perceive themselves to be less obligated to the employer than they expect their employer to be in return. Respondents expect that the strongest obligations their employers should have toward them are related to Stable working conditions ($m= 4.40$, $p < 0.001$), Long-term relations ($m= 4.13$, $p < 0.001$), and Organizational support ($m= 4.10$, $p < 0.001$). This can be interpreted as the respondents expecting their employers to ensure them stable and predictable working terms and conditions – these obligations concern job security. Specified working terms is the dimension where obligations were rated the lowest. Low obligations in this dimension were in accordance with low obligations in Explicitly defined relations from employee obligations, as the two represent the Tangibility feature. The results are contradictory in the Time-frame feature, as respondents expect their employers to guarantee conditions for long-term employment relationships but themselves don't feel obliged to have longer tenure in the organization.

To test differences between work status groups in obligation, a mean rating two-way ANOVA test was run. Significant variances between sample means on almost all dimensions were revealed. Independent sample *t*-tests were conducted to test for significant differences between work status groups in psychological contract dimensions for both employee and employer obligations. Statistically significant differences appeared between lower-skilled workers group and all other work status groups on all employee obligation dimensions. Time-frame dimension in employee obligations was the only dimension where differences between work status groups were the smallest and the only significant difference was found in the workers group.

Specialists and supervisors showed similar pattern in the assessment of employee obligations; the only statistically significant difference between these groups

appeared in the Personal contribution (scope) dimension ($t = 2.284, p < .023$). Similar understanding of employee obligations was also revealed between the managers and senior managers groups. No significant differences were found between these groups in six dimensions. A t -test revealed differences in two obligation dimensions – Personal contribution (scope) ($t = 2.74, p < .007$) and Focus on organizational needs (focus) ($t = 2.064, p < .041$).

Differences between the senior managers group and specialists and supervisors groups were similar. Statistically significant differences were found in six dimensions. Differences were absent only in two dimensions – Career in organization (time-frame) and Social relations (scope).

A significantly different employee obligation pattern was revealed in the workers group.

The results were different concerning employer obligations. There were few statistically significant differences between work status groups. All work status groups perceived employer obligations quite similarly. Managers and senior managers had similar understandings of employer obligations; no significant differences were found between the two groups in these obligations. Statistically significant differences were found in two dimensions between lower-skilled workers group and all other groups – Specified working terms (tangibility) ($t = 3.816-7.462, p < .000$) and Empowerment (focus) ($t = 2.112-6.264, p < .000-.035$). A similar pattern was revealed between the managers and specialists and supervisors groups. In addition, significant differences were found between senior managers and workers and supervisors groups in the Flexibility (stability) (respectively $t = 2.385, p < .018$; $t = 2.057, p < .042$) scale.

The specialists and supervisors groups showed similar results on employer obligations dimensions. Statistically significant difference between groups was found only in one scale – Empowerment (focus) ($t = 2.089; p < .037$).

Mean scores for perceived obligations were computed for each work status group (Table 18.). The mean scores show the importance the respondents placed on proposed employee and employer obligations. These understandings of importance affect employee performance. In absolute terms, representatives perceive that they have obligations in all employee psychological contract dimensions. The higher the mean scores (the scale was from 1 to 5 points), the stronger the obligations and the more the respondents believed they fulfilled the perceived obligations. Low scores indicated the absence of obligations on the assessed dimension. The same holds for the employer's perceived obligations – the higher the mean scores, the stronger obligations the respondents believe the employer has toward them, and low obligations indicate that respondents don't expect their employers to be committed to them in these dimensions. A t -test revealed significant differences in the assessment of employee obligations between lower-skilled workers and other groups.

Table 18. Mean scores for employee and employer obligations of work status groups.

	<i>a</i>	Lower-skilled worker M(SD)	Specialist M (SD)	Super- visor M (SD)	Manager M (SD)	Senior manager M (SD)
Employee obligations						
Career in organization	.753	3,05 (0.869)	3,22 (0.864)	3,12 (0.904)	3,23 (0.865)	3,26 (0.909)
Explicitly defined relations	.801	3,61 (0.932)	2,71 (0.911)	2,60 (0.897)	2,32 (0.962)	2,08 (0.956)
Dynamic performance	.689	3,80 (0.687)	3,91 (0.638)	4,04 (0.605)	4,13 (0.524)	4,31 (0.526)
Personal contribution	.701	3,43 (0.645)	3,62 (0.594)	3,79 (0.646)	4,01 (0.583)	4,29 (0.498)
Social relations	.727	4,09 (0.603)	4,20 (0.542)	4,14 (0.553)	4,25 (0.512)	4,30 (0.407)
Enhancing employability	.784	3,45 (0.736)	3,79 (0.677)	3,76 (0.677)	3,96 (0.630)	4,09 (0.704)
Focus on org. needs	.741	3,89 (0.659)	4,05 (0.565)	4,08 (0.563)	4,16 (0.578)	4,36 (0.417)
Volition	.726	3,45 (0.712)	3,78 (0.628)	3,87 (0.588)	4,16 (0.592)	4,29 (0.578)
Employer obligations						
Long term relations	.678	4,11 (0.589)	4,14 (0.609)	4,07 (0.527)	4,20 (0.547)	4,07 (0.677)
Specified working terms	.806	3,59 (0.784)	3,21 (0.821)	3,10 (0.825)	2,81 (0.877)	2,72 (1.062)
Stable working conditions	.719	4,42 (0.562)	4,40 (0.553)	4,37 (0.519)	4,38 (0.549)	4,37 (0.527)
Flexibility	.797	3,91 (0.726)	3,97 (0.784)	3,95 (0.617)	4,05 (0.669)	4,19 (0.629)
Organizational support	.759	4,07 (0.657)	4,13 (0.644)	4,05 (0.670)	4,12 (0.629)	4,18 (0.636)
Employee centrality	.823	4,05 (0.723)	4,00 (0.736)	3,95 (0.723)	4,02 (0.683)	4,05 (0.667)
Empowerment	.786	3,75 (0.668)	3,97 (0.655)	4,13 (0.607)	4,31 (0.602)	4,35 (0.627)
Equal treatment	.716	4,22 (0.695)	4,19 (0.670)	4,03 (0.723)	4,10 (0.744)	4,11 (0.642)

** p- ,000; * p- ,05

Compared to other groups, lower-skilled workers have the weakest obligations (Table 18.). The only exception is Explicitly defined relations, where the lower-skilled workers group show the highest mean scores. They feel to be obliged to perform exactly in the ways expected and take responsibility only in the frames of determined work tasks. There are no significant differences between groups in time-frame obligations. All groups showed low obligations in the Career in organization dimension; this indicates that representatives of all groups aren't committed to stay in the organization for a longer period. The obligation strength to stay in the organization for a longer period is correlated with obligation strengths in the scope dimension of both relations – on the Personal contribution ($r = .336$, $p < .000$), Social relations ($r = .225$, $p < .000$), and Focus on organizational needs scale

($r = .309$, $p < .000$). Persons who are eager to make bigger personal contributions and keep organizational needs and interests in focus in their behavior are more ready to tie their career to the organization.

Differences between groups in employer obligations were small and mainly insignificant. Differences between all groups were significant in only two dimensions: Specified working terms and Empowerment. Lower-skilled workers and specialists perceived their employers to be more obligated to provide unambiguously defined, explicitly specified and clearly observable working terms, where the reward system is clear and stable, than other groups. Specified working terms correlate positively, but weakly, with two scales: Stable working conditions ($r = .239$, $p < .000$) and Equal treatment ($r = .237$, $p < .000$). The opposite is seen with the Empowerment dimension. The lower-skilled workers group had the lowest scores in that dimension.

Correlation analysis (Pearson's correlation) revealed significant relations between position and Explicitly defined relations ($r = -.300$, $p < .000$), Personal contribution ($r = .363$, $p < .000$), and Volition ($r = .326$, $p < .000$). These findings indicate that managers (on different levels) perceive themselves as having greater personal obligations toward the organization than lower-skilled workers do. Position wasn't significantly related to Career in organization. With other employee obligations, position had positive, significant, but weak relations ($r = 0.213 - 0.190$).

The biggest differences in mean scores in both obligation scales were shown by the lower-skilled workers group. Their understanding of employee obligations differ from those of other work status groups. This group showed the highest obligations in Social relations ($m = 4.09$, $sd = 0.603$), Focus on organizational ($m = 3.89$, $sd = 0.659$) needs and Dynamic performance ($m = 3.80$, $sd = 0.687$). They feel the obligation to perform on a collective basis, to act in the interests of the organization, and to respond to changing conditions. Obligations were lowest in this group in the Career in the organization dimension ($m = 3.05$, $sd = 0.869$). But highest, in comparison with other groups, were their obligations in the Explicitly defined relations dimension ($m = 3.61$, $sd = 0.932$), which indicate the willingness to take responsibility only in the framework of clearly defined and specified work tasks. They are ready to keep promises only within the framework of explicitly agreed conditions and terms. Representatives of this group are less engaged and feel less obliged toward the organization. Relatively low were obligations on dimensions that represent independence, initiative and autonomy. Managers showed quite the opposite pattern of obligations. They showed relatively high obligations on all except one dimension – Explicitly defined relations ($m = 3.05$, $sd = 0.869$). Managers are eager to take responsibility for their own ability to perform well, to make personal contributions, and to align their own behavior in accordance with the organization's interests and needs. Low obligations in Explicitly defined relations indicate that managers expect to have relations based on mutual trust and interests.

Differences in employer obligations between work status groups were few and small. All groups showed high obligations in all but one dimension – Specified working terms. High scores show that respondents are quite demanding to their

employers; they expect their employers to be committed to them on a large scale of obligations. Obligations were highest in the managers groups. Obligations were highest in the Stable working conditions ($m= 4.37$, $sd= 0.527$), Empowerment ($m= 4.35$, $sd= 0.627$), and Organizational support ($m= 4.18$, $sd= 0.636$) dimensions. The workers group's expectations in regard to employer obligations were highest in Stable working conditions ($m= 4.42$, $sd= 0.562$), Equal treatment ($m= 4.22$, $sd= 0.695$), and Long-term relations ($m= 4.11$, $sd= 0.589$). They expect that their employers offer them stable and secure work conditions and environment and uniform treatment of all employees. These obligations were rated slightly higher by this group than the managers group.

The managers group differed from other work status groups as their own obligations are as high as expectations toward their employers. The workers group had relatively low obligations toward their organization but in return expected relatively stronger commitments from their employers. The workers group didn't hold a balanced form of psychological contract.

Linear regression analysis was conducted to test the impact of position and demographic variables on the eight psychological contract dimensions measuring employee obligations (Table 19). Variables were entered in two steps: education level, length of service, length of employment, gender and age in the first step and position in the second.

Low R-squares indicate that the selected predictors account for only 6 to 14% of the variance in the outcome variables (employee obligations). When looking separately at obligations, the level of position in the organization has no impact on only one obligation – Career in organization (time-frame). Position has significant negative regression weight on one obligation – Explicitly defined relations, indicating that individuals in higher positions are expected to have weaker obligations on that dimension, and significant positive regression weights on all other scales. Position's influence is mediated by gender on two obligations. Social relations obligations strength within the male group was influenced by position ($\beta = .285$, $t = 5.285$, $p<.000$); in the female group position had no significant impact. Female managers are expected to have higher obligations in the Focus on organizational needs dimension.

Age has significant impact on obligations strength in three psychological contract dimensions: positive impact on involvement obligations, which means that older individuals are expected to have stronger obligations when staying longer in an organization. On two scales age acts as a weak mediator, having negative associations with Dynamic performance and Enhancing employability, indicating that younger persons in higher positions are expected to have stronger obligations in these psychological contract dimensions.

Table 19. Beta weights of significant predictors of employee obligations assessed from the employee perspective.

a	1		2		3		4		5		6		7		8	
	Step 1	Step 2	Step 1	Step 2	Step 1	Step 2	Step 1	Step 2	Step 1	Step 2	Step 1	Step 2	Step 1	Step 2	Step 1	Step 2
education		-.183*	.148*	.060 ns	.163*	.033 ns			.188*	.110*	.120*	.051 ns	.182*	.07 ns		
org. tenure	.147*	.145*														
gender ^b				.092*			.117*	.141*			.096*	.134*				
age	.276	.274*		-.125*					-.226*	-.236						
position				.245*		.360*		.122*		.214*		.193*				.308*
R ²	.142	.144	.034	.097	.034	.139	.022	.035	.069	.107	.031	.061	.034	.112		
R ² change	.002	.070	.049		.105		.012		.038		.030		.078			
F change	1.632 ns	62.065**	43.460**		97.781**		10.084**		33.606**		25.571**		70.111**			

1- Career in organization (time-frame); 2- Explicitly defined relations (tangibility); 3- Dynamic performance (low stability); 4- Personal contribution (scope); 5- Social relations (scope); 6-Enhancing employability (focus); 7- Focus on organizational needs (loyalty) (focus); 8- Volition (contract level).

^a Only statistically significant (p < 0.05) standardized regression coefficients are presented, * p < 0.01

^b Coded as 1 = male, 2 = female

Table 20. Beta weights of significant predictors of employer obligations assessed from the employee perspective.

a	1		2		3		4		5		6		7		8	
	Step 1	Step 2	Step 1	Step 2	Step 1	Step 2	Step 1	Step 2	Step 1	Step 2	Step 1	Step 2	Step 1	Step 2	Step 1	Step 2
education			-.132*		.031 ns		.108*		.073 ns	.071				.165*		.070 ns
org. tenure																
gender ^b	.127*	.140*			.155*	.155*	.069	.155*	.147*	.135*	.103*	.105*			.135*	.121*
age	-.099	-.102					-.203*	-.208*	-.094	-.094	-.114*	-.115*	-.134*	-.146*		
position	--						--	.096	--	--	--	--	--	.260*	--	--
R ²	.024	.027	.018	.027	.027	.027	.044	.052	.035	.035	.023	.023	.039	.094	.021	.025
R ² change	.003		.063		.000		.008		.002		.000		.055		.004	
F change	2.849e ns		54.988*		.004 ns		6.414		1.326 ns		.032 ns		48.822*		3.208 ns	

1-Long term relations (time-frame); 2-Specified working terms (tangibility); 3-Stable working conditions (stability); 4-Flexibility (stability); 5-Organizational support (scope); 6-Employee centrality (focus); 7- Empowerment (focus); 8- Equal treatment (contract level).

^a Only statistically significant (p < 0.05) standardized regression coefficients are presented, * p < 0.01

^b Coded as 1 = male, 2 = female

Linear regression analysis was also used to assess the impact of position and demographic variables on the eight employer obligations (Table 20.). The predicted model's capacity to predict the outcomes on the eight employer obligation dimensions is weak; R-squares indicate that selected predictors account for only 2 to 9% of the variance in the outcome variables (employer obligations). Position has significant impact only on three obligation dimensions: Specified working terms, Flexibility, and Empowerment. The beta values in regression of the position variable on the other five dimensions were not significant. Age and gender are better predictors of perceived employer obligations strength. Younger women have stronger demands for employer obligations. Similar results about women's relationships with employer obligations, as women are more alert and have greater expectations from their employer, have been seen by other researchers too (e.g. Coyle-Shapiro and Kessler 2002; Bellou 2009).

2.4.3. Results of the second survey

In the second survey, participants of the managers sample assessed employee and employer obligations from the employer perspective. The results of this survey allow one to assess whether there is agreement between the two parties regarding their obligations.

A *t*-test was run to reveal significant differences between managerial groups in perceived employee and employer obligations. No significant differences were found between the supervisors and managers groups in both employee and employer obligations. Significant differences were found between senior managers and supervisors groups in one employee obligations dimension – Explicitly defined relations (tangibility) ($t = 2.41$; $p < .02$) – and in two employer obligations scales – Specified working terms (tangibility) ($t = 2.64$; $p < .011$) and Stable working conditions (stability) ($t = 2.009$; $p < .05$). Between senior managers and managers, the group test revealed significant difference only in one dimension – employer obligation Stable working conditions ($t = 2.258$; $p < .027$).

Mean scores (Table 21.) for employee obligations reflect employers' expectations for workers' obligations toward the organization and mean scores for employer obligations show employers' understandings of the organization's obligations toward its workers. The results show that employers expect the workers to be flexible, focused on organizational needs, more eager to negotiate over one's employment conditions and relationships, and ready to fulfill over-role tasks. They also expect workers to keep their knowledge and skills on the required level. Correlation analysis revealed a negative relationship between the Explicitly defined relations and Volition dimensions ($r = -.321$, $p < 0.02$), but strong positive relationships between Dynamic performance, Focus on organizational needs, Volition and Enhancing employability dimensions ($r = .405 - .665$, $p < 0.003$). In return, by the understanding of managers as representatives of the organization, the organization is obliged to create a stable work environment, to provide support in handling problems and fulfilling personal needs that make a long stay in the

organization possible. The only dimension that was scored low was Specified working terms, which means that organizations want to leave the possibilities for changes in work arrangement and in tasks.

Table 21. Mean scores for employee and employer obligations assessed from employer perspective

Obligations / position	α	Supervisors M (SD)	Managers M (SD)	Senior manager M (SD)
<i>Employee obligations</i>				
Career in organization (time-frame)	.714	3.31 (0.670)	3.15 (0.827)	3.28 (0.545)
Explicitly defined relations (tangibility)	.746	2.81 (0.771)	2.40 (0.821)	2.24 (0.703)
Dynamic performance (stability)	.709	4.04 (0.528)	4.22 (0.539)	4.38 (0.550)
Personal contribution (scope)	.667	3.68 (0.412)	3.91 (0.424)	3.91 (0.463)
Social relations (scope)	.753	4.35 (0.554)	4.38 (0.481)	4.34 (0.573)
Enhancing employability (focus)	.765	3.77 (0.599)	3.84 (0.657)	3.89 (0.667)
Focus on org. needs (focus)	.698	4.34 (0.465)	4.33 (0.488)	4.34 (0.567)
Volition (contract level)	.696	4.09 (0.487)	4.14 (0.549)	4.21 (0.591)
<i>Employer obligations</i>				
Long term relations (time frame)	.734	4.14 (0.435)	4.22 (0.468)	4.23 (0.432)
Specified working terms (tangibility)	.717	3.37 (0.756)	2.97 (0.724)	2.81 (0.618)
Stable working conditions (stability)	.599	4.61 (0.360)	4.52 (0.406)	4.30 (0.525)
Flexibility (stability)	.738	4.21 (0.548)	4.12 (0.543)	4.14 (0.557)
Organizational support (scope)	.705	4.31 (0.437)	4.27 (0.478)	4.27 (0.502)
Employee centrality (focus)	.696	4.25 (0.417)	4.14 (0.483)	4.15 (0.542)
Empowerment (focus)	.746	3.94 (0.618)	4.12 (0.526)	4.15 (0.519)
Equal treatment (contract level)	.706	4.13 (0.674)	4.37 (0.552)	4.16 (0.664)

A *t*-test was run to reveal significant differences in perceived employee and employer obligations between managers as representatives of the organization and as employees assessing their own obligations. No significant differences were found in the supervisors groups in both employee and employer obligations dimensions. Their own perceived obligations were the same as the obligations they expected workers to have. In the senior managers group difference was revealed only in one dimension – Personal contribution ($t = 3.46, p < .001$) – which means that senior managers expect less contribution from workers than from themselves. A number of

differences were found between the two perspectives in the obligations of the managers group. Differences in the assessment of employee obligation strength were found in two dimensions. Although the scores were high on both occasions, when assessing obligations in the Focus on organizational needs dimension as employees, this group gave lower scores than when assessing these obligations as representatives of the organization (respectively $m = 4.16$ and $m = 4.33$; $t = -2.193$, $p < .003$). The same pattern appears in the assessment of obligations in the Social relations dimension (assessed as employee $m = 4.2$ and assessed as representative $m = 4.38$; $t = -2.022$, $p < .004$). Managers expect workers to have stronger obligations in these dimensions than they perceive for their own obligations. Perspective differences were revealed in three employer dimensions – Stable working conditions (assessed as employee $m = 4.38$ and assessed as representative $m = 4.52$; $t = -1.99$, $p < .04$), Equal treatment (assessed as employee $m = 4.1$ and assessed as representative $m = 4.37$; $t = -2.796$, $p < .006$), and Empowerment. In the first two, managers scored higher as representatives of the organization; in the Empowerment dimensions the scores were the opposite. Managers as employees expect organizations to empower them more than they feel the organization is obliged to empower other workers (assessed as employee $m = 4.31$ and assessed as representative $m = 4.12$; $t = 1.964$, $p < .05$).

The few differences between assessment perspectives confirm the results Coyle-Shapiro (2001) found in her study. A manager's own view of perceived employer obligations to them as employees is positively associated with their view of the employer's obligations to employees more generally ($\beta = .41$, $p < .01$). This applies also to employee obligations – the perception of the manager's own obligations has a strong impact on the perception of employee obligations more generally.

Table 22 demonstrates the differences in strengths and the importance given to the obligations from the employee and employer perspectives. The biggest differences are between lower-skilled workers and employers (managers as representatives of the organization) and the specialists and employers groups. A *t*-test revealed significant differences between lower-skilled workers and employers groups in seven employee obligation dimensions ($t = 3.514 - 7.523$, $p < .000$) and in five employer dimensions ($t = 2.071 - 5.002$, $p < .04 - .001$). A similar pattern of differences was found in assessments comparing the employers and specialists groups. The *t*-test revealed significant differences between these groups in six employee obligations dimensions ($t = 2.834 - 4.595$, $p < .007 - .000$) and in four employer dimensions ($t = 2.037 - 2.383$, $p < .045 - .019$).

In employee obligation dimensions, lower-skilled workers and specialists both scored lower than employers in all dimensions except one – Explicitly defined relations. The biggest difference in the assessment of obligation strength appeared in the Volition dimension. That can mean that employees are expected to take more responsibility for their work than they are ready to do.

Table 22. Differences in mean scores for employee and employer obligations between workers, specialists and managers, as representatives of organization.

	Employers (managers as repr. of org.)	Lower-skilled workers ^a	Specialist ^b
<i>Employee obligations</i>			
Career in organization (time-frame)	3.21 (0.716)	3.05 (0.869)	3.22 (0.864)
Explicitly defined relat. (tangibility)	2.40 (0.783)	3.61 (0.932)**	2.71 (0.911)**
Dynamic performance (stability)	4.25 (0.549)	3.80 (0.687)**	3.91 (0.638)**
Personal contribution (scope)	3.88 (0.439)	3.43 (0.645)**	3.62 (0.594)**
Social relations (scope)	4.36 (0.520)	4.09 (0.603)**	4.20 (0.542)**
Enhancing employability (focus)	3.85 (0.645)	3.45 (0.736)**	3.79 (0.677)
Focus on org. needs (focus)	4.33 (0.508)	3.89 (0.659)**	4.05 (0.565)**
Volition (contract level)	4.15 (0.553)	3.45 (0.712)**	3.78 (0.628)**
<i>Employer obligations</i>			
Long term relations (time frame)	4.21 (0.450)	4.11 (0.589)*	4.14 (0.609)
Specified working terms (tangibility)	2.96 (0.745)	3.59 (0.784)**	3.21 (0.821)*
Stable working conditions (stability)	4.45 (0.460)	4.42 (0.562)	4.40 (0.553)
Flexibility (stability)	4.14 (0.541)	3.91 (0.726)*	3.97 (0.784)
Organizational support (scope)	4.27 (0.477)	4.07 (0.657)*	4.13 (0.644)*
Employee centrality (focus)	4.15 (0.492)	4.05 (0.723)	4.00 (0.736)
Empowerment (focus)	4.11 (0.532)	3.75 (0.668)**	3.97 (0.655)*
Equal treatment (contract level)	4.26 (0.610)	4.22 (0.695)	4.19 (0.670)*

^a differences in assessment between lower-skilled workers and managers as representatives of the organization groups

^b differences in assessment between specialists and managers as representatives of the organization groups

** p- .00; * p- .05

Differences in the assessment of employer obligations are smaller, but the pattern is the same. Lower-skilled workers and specialists perceive their organizations as having weaker obligations toward them than the employers group has assessed these obligations. The only dimension where lower-skilled workers and specialists groups perceived the organization to have stronger obligations toward them than the employers have assessed is the Specified working terms dimension.

2.4.4. Conclusions of the second study and discussion

To confirm or disprove the fourth proposition, three tasks were set for the second study: (1) (**sixth task**) to find out organization agents' (managers as representatives of the organization) perceptions about the organization's psychological contract; (2) (**seventh task**) to compare the expectations with managers' own psychological contracts, to find the differences and congruencies; (3) (**eighth task**) to compare organization agents' psychological contracts with the psychological contracts preferred by employees. The **fourth proposition** stated that differences between managers' and employees' perceptions of obligations and the differences between obligations seen from different managers' perspectives are heavily influenced by managers' own psychological contracts.

To examine the proposition, psychological contracts were measured from two perspectives – managers as employees and managers as representatives of the organization. All the tasks were completed and all the parts of the proposition were confirmed.

The basic statistical analysis results of the **first survey's** whole sample showed that there was a small imbalance in strengths between employee and employer obligations. Obligations were higher in the employer obligation dimensions than in employee obligations. That means that representatives perceived themselves to be less obligated to their employer than they expected their employer to be in return.

The strongest obligations respondents perceive themselves as having toward their employer concerned Social relations, Focus on organizational needs, and Dynamic performance. Obligations were rated low in Explicitly defined obligations and Career in organizations. The first reflects that workers need to have employment relations based more on trust and not so much on clear and strict terms. The second reflects employees' low willingness to form long-term relations with one organization. The willingness to make personal contributions and take responsibility for one's own employability was also relatively low. Respondents were committed to organization through social bonding and were ready to act in the interests of the organization and modify their behavior in ways which were most likely to lead them to attain organizational goals. They bond with organizations through passive loyalty, letting employers conduct their behavior. On average they aren't ready to take a risk in employment relations.

Respondents expect that the strongest obligations their employers should have toward them were related to Stable working conditions, Long-term relations, and Organizational support. This can be interpreted as the respondents expect their employers to ensure stable and predictable working terms and conditions; these obligations concern job security.

Among the controlled context variables, position in the organization was the strongest predictor. Position significantly shaped the formation of psychological contracts and also acted as a mediator for age and education in relations with employee obligations.

A comparison of the mean scores given to employee obligations revealed significant differences between different work status groups. The biggest differences between work status groups were between lower-skilled workers and other groups. Statistically significant differences appeared in all employee obligations dimensions. These results confirm the findings of the first study. Differences between manager and senior manager groups were small or insignificant. Similar patterns of employee obligations were also showed by the specialists and supervisors groups. Small differences can be explained by the assumption that changes taking place in specialists' working situations and conditions are similar to changes on lower managerial levels.

The biggest differences in mean scores in both obligation scales were showed by the lower-skilled workers group. Lower-skilled workers had the weakest obligations in employee obligations. The only exception was Explicitly defined relations, where lower-skilled workers showed the highest mean scores. They felt they were obliged to perform exactly in the ways expected and were ready to take responsibility only in the framework of determined work tasks. There were no significant differences between groups in time-frame obligations.

The lower-skilled workers' assessment of employee obligations differs from other work status groups. This group showed the highest obligations on Social relations, Focus on organizational needs, and Dynamic performance. They feel an obligation to perform on a collective bases, to act in the interests of the organization, and to respond to changing conditions. Obligations were lowest in this group in the Career in the organization dimension. But highest, in comparison with other groups, were obligations in the Explicitly defined relations dimension, which indicated the willingness to take responsibility only in the framework of clearly defined and specified work tasks. They are ready to make promises only within the framework of explicitly agreed conditions and terms. Representatives of this group are less engaged and feel less obliged toward the organization. Relatively low were obligations in dimensions that represent independence, initiative and autonomy. Managers showed quite the opposite pattern of obligations. They showed relatively high obligations on all except one dimension – Explicitly defined relations. Managers are eager to take responsibility for their own ability to perform well, to make personal contributions and to align own behavior in accordance with the organization's interests and needs. Low obligations on Explicitly defined relations indicate that managers expect to have relations based on mutual trust and interests.

As argued earlier in the theoretical part of the thesis, employees' psychological contracts are influenced by their own experiences within the organization (Rousseau 1995, 2001; Shore and Tetrick 1994). Psychological contracts are shaped by gained and interpreted information which is available from different channels and the channels are different for different work status groups. This is supported by the data obtained with regression analysis. The results revealed position's strong influence on the strength of employee obligations. Very often work position in an organization determines the quality, content, and amount of information a person receives. The work situation for lower-skilled workers is different from other work

status groups. The nature of their work is important to consider. Lower-skilled workers often perform relatively routine work with low task variety and relatively low job control and autonomy (e.g., Lambert, 1999; Golden, 2006). Workplace changes are fewer and smaller in lower-skilled jobs compared to other organizational levels. Their access to information and opportunities to develop their work are still limited. They are less engaged in decision-making processes and usually motivated by extrinsic rewards. These all are factors to consider when speaking of lower-skilled workers' psychological contracts. These explain the differences between them and other work status groups.

Lower-skilled workers were the only group that rated high in the Explicitly defined relations dimension. Compared to other groups, their ratings of obligations were lower in Personal contribution, Enhancing employability and Volition dimensions. The low level of obligations in these dimensions can be caused by the tendency for lower-skilled workers to have far less flexibility in the timing, location and duration of their work (Lambert and Henley 2007; Swanberg et al. 2005). Low mean scores in the Volition dimension can be explained by lower-skilled workers' position in organizations; they often are placed in powerless organizational positions as they do not control the means and modes of production (as compared to managers, owners, etc.) (Zweig 2000). From a material standpoint, they tend to have less access to stable and secure resources over time, which materially disadvantages them and further limits their agency on the job (Mishel, Bernstein and Shierholz 2009; Perrucci and Wysong 2003).

This is an area of concern, as the relationships formed by managers with lower-skilled workers and specialists in working situations are different. Because of the similarities in psychological contracts, specialists and managers can gain a bigger understanding than lower-skilled workers and managers.

The patterns of employer obligations were similar between different work status groups. There were few or statistically non-significant differences in expectations about employer obligations toward an employee. The only differences among all the work status groups were found in two dimensions: Specified working terms and Empowerment. Lower-skilled workers and specialists, more than managerial groups, perceive their employers to be obligated to provide unambiguously defined, explicitly specified and clearly observable working terms, where responsibility and reward systems are clear and stable. Low importance given to the employer's obligations of Empowerment is in accordance with the low importance given to the employee obligations of Volition, as they both enhance employees' independence, responsibilities, and the capacity to make choices and to transform those choices into desired actions and outcomes. All groups showed high obligations in all but one dimension – Specified working terms. This is a significant difference in the perceived obligations between workers and managers. But in general, the perception of the employer's obligations toward employees isn't so much influenced by one's position in an organization. This is the opposite of employee obligations, where position had a significant influence on the strength of obligations.

Managers and senior managers had similar understandings of employer obligations; no significant differences were found between the two groups in these obligations. High scores show that respondents are quite demanding to their employers; they expect their employers to be committed to them on a large scale of obligations. Obligations were highest in the managers groups. Obligations were highest in Stable working conditions, Empowerment, and Organizational support dimensions. The workers group's expectations in regard to employer obligations were highest in Stable working conditions, Equal treatment, and Long-term relations. They expect that their employers offer them stable and secure work conditions and environment and uniform treatment of all employees. These obligations were rated slightly higher than in the managers group.

The managers groups differed from other work status groups, as their own obligations were as high as expectations toward their employers. The workers group had relatively low obligations toward their organizations but in return expected relatively stronger commitments from their employers. The workers group doesn't hold a balanced form of psychological contracts. Shore and Barksdale (1998), studying interrelations between employee and employer obligations, identified four types of interrelations. They categorized psychological contracts into four types based on the extent to which there is balance in obligations and on the degree to which the parties are perceived to be obligated – mutual high obligation, mutual low obligation, and employee over-obligation and employee under-obligation. The latter is characteristic to the psychological contract form developed by the lower-skilled workers group. Both managers groups showed mutual high obligation forms; they are more demanding toward themselves and expect strong commitment in return from their organization.

In **the second survey** managers assessed psychological contract obligations from the employer perspective. Two findings should be considered important. No big differences were found in assessments between managerial groups. The understanding of employers' expectations for workers' obligations toward the organization and understandings of organization's obligations toward its workers were similar over managerial groups. Strong consistency in employer obligations perceived by managers as representatives of organization was also revealed in the research results of the Psycones project (Guest et al. 2010).

No significant differences were found between supervisors' assessments of PC from two perspectives in both the employee and employer obligations dimensions. Their own (as employee) perceived obligations were the same as the obligations they (as representative of the organization) expected workers to have. Supervisors are the ones who directly manage other employees. They are responsible for the day-to-day performance of smaller groups. And often they are not necessarily better at tasks than the people they supervise. They expect others to have the same obligations they perceive themselves to have. Their psychological contract is similar to specialists' but different from that of lower-skilled workers. In the senior managers group, a difference between the two perspectives was found only in one dimension. Senior managers feel more obliged to contribute to the organization than they as

representatives of the organization expect from the employees. They usually aren't in direct contact with and visible to the greater workforce. But they spend most of their time developing and implementing strategic action plans and policies needed to achieve organizational goals. A number of differences were found between the two perspectives in obligations in the managers group. Although the scores were high on both occasions, concerning employee obligations the managers group was more demanding toward employees than toward themselves. The same was revealed in the set of employer obligations. In some dimensions they assessed employer's obligations toward the workers as stronger than the employer's obligations toward themselves. That means that they expect the employer to offer more incentives and be more committed to employees, as they expect their employer to have a commitment to them. The only difference concerned the Empowerment dimension they assessed these obligations toward themselves as employees as stronger. Managers serve as a liaison between higher-level managers and the rest of the organization. They are typically much more visible to the greater workforce than higher-level managers. The pressure from higher management levels can make them more demanding toward workers than toward themselves.

The few small differences between the managers' two perspectives in all groups (as employee and as employer representative) in most of the psychological contract dimensions suggests that a manager's own psychological contract has a strong impact on the formation of expectations concerning employee obligations toward the organization and the organization's obligations toward its workers. There is still not enough evidence about the influence of a manager's self-interests on his/her behavior and decisions as representatives of the organization. Hallier and James (1997) have found that it is not always easy for managers to represent their own and their employers' interests simultaneously. A manager's own self-interests may exert an influence on how he/she, as an organizational representative, manages the employment relationship with employees.

The second important finding and issue of concern was that employers' understandings of employee obligations and employer obligations toward employees didn't match with lower-skilled workers' and specialists' psychological contracts. Previous studies have shown that workers' attitudes and performance are better when both parties agree on what the employer has promised the worker in return of fulfillment of his/her obligations than when a mismatch exists (Rousseau 2004).

An important issue in PC and employment relations is whether the content of the exchange (inducements provided for contributions given) are recognized and similarly understood by the parties to the employee-organization relations. There is some evidence that managers and employees do not agree on what is exchanged (Lester et al. 2002; Tekleab and Taylor 2003). Research on performance appraisal and feedback has shown that employees and managers often do not agree on employee performance (Coyle-Shapiro and Shore 2007). There is a possibility that the representatives of the organization and the employee don't have common understanding of the relationship itself.

PART 3. CONCLUSIONS

3.1. Discussion on research propositions

Four research propositions were stated for this thesis and will be discussed in the following part.

3.1.1. First proposition

The first proposition posed that preferred forms of employee psychological contracts will differ based on gender, age and education level.

This proposition was confirmed. The obtained results revealed statistically significant relationships between employee obligations and individual characteristics, but the differences were small and the relationships were complex. When controlling the validity of the second proposition, the results indicated the moderating role of position in organization. The role of position will be discussed later.

Psychological contracts are subjective in nature and each individual holds his/her different perception of mutual obligation under the contract (Robinson et al. 1994). Differences can arise from employee perceptions and personal needs at a certain point in time. Psychological contracts are likely to vary across groups of individuals within and across organizations (Herriot and Pemberton 1997). Gender, age, and education level are among the most fundamental groups to which individuals can belong, and being a member of these groups may have a sound influence on a person's perceptions, attitudes, and performance (e.g. Hall 1994; Williams and O'Reilly 1998). These individual characteristics are considered to be most critical to explain the variability of the results.

Gender differences were small in both psychological contract domains– employee and employer obligations. Differences appeared only in the strength of perceived obligations, but not in the direction. Differences in employee obligations indicate that men tend to have more obligations that bond them to the organization – career in the organization and a focus on organizational needs. Women take more obligations that are concerned with dynamic performance, employability enhancing, and social relations. Women take more responsibility for their performance. The strength of these obligations was significantly related to position. This means that younger women in higher positions made greater efforts.

In the set of employer obligations, significant differences between genders groups were revealed in two domains – employee centrality and empowerment. On both scales women scored lower than men; although the differences were significant they were small. Men more than women expect their employers to deal more with their

problems and needs and offer them more independence and possibilities to make decisions. Men in their behavior and expectations are more organization-centered.

The differences between gender groups were small and one shouldn't make deeper conclusions. Nevertheless, these results are quite similar to those found by Alimo-Metcalf (1993). Examining differences between female and male managers, she found that women tend to be more concerned with intrinsic job factors like challenge, opportunities and development, and working with friendly people, whereas men seem to care more for extrinsic job factors like high earnings, fringe benefits, and security. Although in this study the individual content of psychological contracts wasn't measured, the features can be connected to those work values measured in the Alimo-Metcalf study.

Other researches haven't succeeded in finding solid evidence for these differences. Herriot and his colleagues (1997) investigated the content of the psychological contract and assumed that there should be a difference in the distribution of perceived obligations between gender groups but failed to support their hypothesis for different expectations between men and women. Smithson and Lewis (2000) didn't find differences between men and women's general expectations from their work. They found that young women of all social classes and educational backgrounds showed strong attachment to the labor market, and most invested in training and qualifications. Gender alone has little role in the differences in psychological contracts. Socio-demographic factors should be addressed together.

Differences between age groups (generations) are usually explained with aging, experiences, life stage and career stage. Each generation entered work life at different points in time and their work attitudes and meaning of working presumably were affected by circumstances and changes in the work environment at that time point. Therefore it is quite predictable to find differences in psychological contracts between different age groups.

Study results showed that younger employees tended to have stronger obligations toward their employer than older employees and in return they expected their employers to be more committed to them. The greatest differences in employee obligations were revealed in career in organization, dynamic performance, and enhancing employability. Younger employees more than older employees felt stronger obligations to have a career in an organization, keep one's knowledge and skills on a high level, and manifest more flexible behavior and attitudes. The age factor was supported with education and position. This means that well-educated younger employees in higher positions were more committed to the organization and expected the same kind of commitment from their employers. One explanation for this is that young people, at the beginning of their working life, feel a stronger need to build up their career and make investments to their employability skills to ensure employment security.

In the set of employer obligations, differences also appeared in four obligation dimensions. The differences were significant, but not as strong as in employee obligations. Differences were in long-term relations, flexibility, employee centrality,

and empowerment. Younger employees were more demanding; they expected their employers to have higher obligations toward them on these dimensions than did their older counterparts. They expected their employers to support their development, give them more independence and the freedom to decide independently, and to create employee-centered relations and flexible working environments. Older employees value more stability, explicitly defined relations, and social relations and prefer more equal treatment. The patterns of the perceived obligations of older and younger employees permit one to speculate that older workers are more committed to the organization and younger employees are more committed to job and career and self-development. Janssens et al. (2003) found quite similar results concerning age. They used a feature-based measure to develop a variety of psychological contracts. Using cluster analysis they revealed six types of psychological contracts. Young and highly educated employees represented a psychology type for which low scores in all scales of both employee and employer obligations were characteristic, but rather high scores were seen on personal investment. Coyle-Shapiro and Kessler (2002) reported something similar to the current study's result for older workers. In their study, older workers reported greater commitment to the organization and at the same time held lower employer obligations.

Younger people seem to have accepted the new psychological contract. They are ready to make contributions, to keep their employability skills on high level, and to meet possible challenges, and in return they expect to get organizational support for their development, more freedom to decide independently, and stable conditions for working.

Education level was the most influential socio-demographic variable. Education level had significant effect on all, except one, employee obligations. Only in the career in organization dimension were no statistically significant differences between education levels found. Substantial differences were revealed in four obligations dimensions: explicitly defined relations, personal contribution, enhancing employability, and focus on organizational needs. The higher the education level, the lower the mean scores in the explicitly defined relations dimension. This indicates that more educated employees prefer to have relations that rely on trust and responsibility and permit role development and border expansion. They feel responsible for their qualification and are ready to make efforts to meet organizational goals.

Differences in employer obligations were fairly similar to those in employee obligations. Significant differences between education level groups in employer obligations were revealed on four dimensions: long-term relations, flexibility, employee centrality, and empowerment. Respondents with vocational education and higher scored higher on these dimensions than respondents with less education.

Employees with less education held weaker employee obligations than employees with higher education and were less demanding with regard to employer obligations. They prefer to have simple and clearly defined employment relations. They were ready to contribute only within the framework of their specified in-role

tasks. A higher education level was related to strong obligations in dimensions related to individual development and success and these employees felt obligated to be actively involved in determining their contract terms and explicitly expressing their needs. In return for fulfillment of their obligations, they expect their employers to provide them opportunities for development and support to manage organizational changes. They expect their employers to establish stable and long-term relations with them and treat them as individuals, value employee contributions, and care about their performance and well-being.

More educated people usually hold positions in organizations where they have more control over their own work and through their behavior and decisions can influence others and bring about changes. The set of expressed obligations permit them to apply to this kind of positions and to keep them.

Cavanaugh and Noe (1999) examined the possible effects of gender, age, and organizational level on the relationships between work experiences, relational aspects of the new psychological contract, and job satisfaction, intentions to remain, and participation in development activities. Their study results showed that the set of work experiences and the set of the components of the new psychological contract explain a significant amount of variance in satisfaction and intention to remain with the employer and demographic variables didn't. Demographic variables also didn't explain the variance in measured new psychological contracts. The current study results support the notion that gender and age are weak predictors and only to a minimum extent explain the variances in psychological contract obligations.

One obligation – explicitly defined relations from employee obligations set – had a significantly different pattern of relations with individual characteristics and context variables. On the level of the whole sample, most of the variables were negatively related to this obligation if they had positive relationships with other employee obligations and vice versa. If the relationships with this obligation were positive, then the variables were negatively related to other obligations. This obligation also correlated negatively with other obligations from both employee and employer obligations sets. The only positive but weak correlation was in one employer obligation – specified working terms. The employee group that rated positively high in the explicitly defined relations obligation was mainly men, less educated, older workers in lower positions. They expect to have clearly defined work relationships with minimum responsibilities.

A quite similar pattern of relationships was revealed with the employer obligation of specified working terms. The workers group who rated high in this obligation was exactly the same. There is a quite simple explanation for this similarity – these dimensions both represent the tangibility feature of psychological contracts.

These findings don't support the statements about age and organization tenure. Rousseau (1989) has argued that the longer a relationship endured between employee and employer, the broader the array of contributions and inducements. In this study this statement didn't find full confirmation.

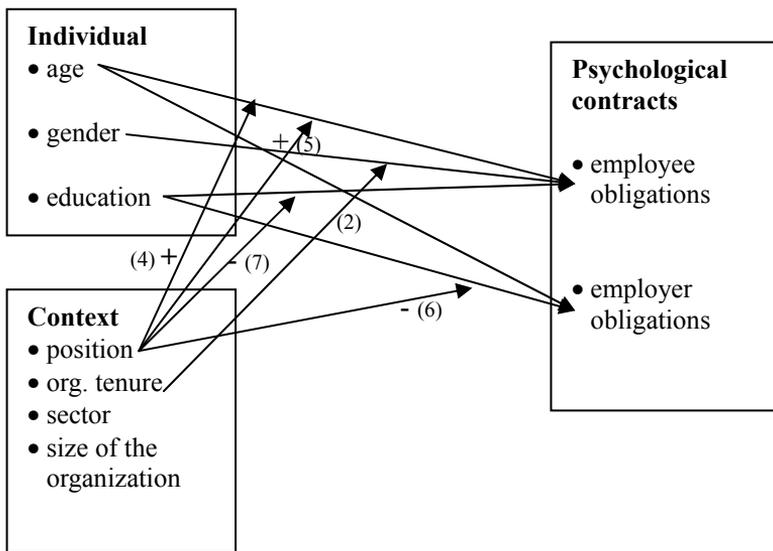


Figure 3. Relations between individual characteristics, context factors and psychological contract obligations

() number of relations; + increase of relationships; - weakening of relationships

3.1.2. Second proposition

The second proposition stated that the strength of both employee and employer perceived obligations are influenced by organizational context variables, as work organization plays a fundamental role in establishing and shaping psychological contracts.

This proposition was controlled in the first study and was only partly confirmed. Analysis revealed that differences in obligation strengths between working sectors, organizational size, and the length of organizational tenure were small and mostly insignificant.

Position in organization had the strongest effect out of all the context variables on the strength and direction of obligations. The results indicate that one's position in the organization was the only context variable that explained significant variance in all employee obligations.

Position in organization (see Figure 3.) affects the strength of the relation between education and seven employee obligations, making the relationship weaker or non-significant. This moderation effect can be explained by the fact that people in higher positions usually have a higher level of education. Position in organization has a similar effect on age. In three occasions it makes the relationships between age and employee obligations stronger. Career in organization and Enhancing employability are important to younger employees in higher positions and Explicitly defined relations are important to older employees in lower positions. In regard to the

obligation Focus on organizational needs, one's position in the organization acts as a mediator for age. When added into the model, a weak significant negative relationship between age and the obligation appeared.

Lower-skilled workers' assessment of employee obligations differ from that of other work status groups. This group showed the highest obligations in Social relations, Focus on organizational needs, and Dynamic performance. They feel obligated to perform on collective bases, to act in the interests of the organization, and to respond to changing conditions. Obligations were lowest in this group in the Career in the organization dimension. But highest, in comparison with other groups, were obligations in the Explicitly defined relations dimension, which indicates the willingness to take responsibility only in the framework of clearly defined and specified work tasks. They are ready to keep promises only within the framework of explicitly agreed conditions and terms. Representatives of this group are less engaged and feel less obliged toward the organization. Relatively low were obligations in dimensions that represent independence, initiative and autonomy. Although they showed high commitment to obligations related to organizational interest in combination with other dimensions, their loyalty to the organization is passive. They don't show initiative and expect others to tell them their duties and arrange work for them. Managers showed quite the opposite pattern of obligations. They showed relatively high obligations in all except one dimension – Explicitly defined relations. Managers are eager to take responsibility for their own ability to perform well, to make personal contributions, and to align own behavior in accordance with the organization's interests and needs. They also showed high commitment to the organization's needs, but their loyalty is more active; they try to make difference by taking the initiative. Low obligations in explicitly defined relations indicate that managers expect to have relations based on mutual trust and interests.

As argued earlier in the theoretical part of the thesis, employees' psychological contracts are influenced by their own experiences within the organization (Rousseau 1995, 2001; Shore and Tetrick 1994). Psychological contracts are shaped by gained and interpreted information which is available from different channels and the channels are different for different work status groups. This is supported by the data obtained with regression analysis. The results revealed position's strong influence on the strength of employee obligations. Very often one's work position in the organization determines the quality, content and amount of information a person receives. The work situation of lower-skilled workers is different from that of other work status groups. The nature of their work is important to consider. Lower-skilled workers often perform relatively routine work with low task variety and relatively low job control and autonomy (e.g., Lambert, 1999; Golden, 2006). Workplace changes are fewer and smaller in lower-skilled jobs compared to other organizational levels. Their access to information and opportunities to develop their work are still limited. They are less engaged in decision-making processes and usually motivated by extrinsic rewards. These all are factors to consider when

speaking of lower-skilled workers' psychological contracts. These explain the differences between them and other work status groups.

Lower-skilled workers were the only group that rated high in the Explicitly defined relations dimension. Compared to other groups, their ratings of obligations were lower in the Personal contribution, Enhancing employability and Volition dimensions. A low level of obligations in these dimensions can be caused by the tendency for lower-skilled workers to have far less flexibility in the timing, location and duration of their work (Lambert and Henley 2007; Swanberg et al. 2005). Low mean scores in the Volition dimension can be explained by lower-skilled workers' position in organizations; they often are placed in powerless organizational positions as they do not control the means and modes of production (as compared to managers, owners, etc.) (Zweig 2000). From a material standpoint, they tend to have less access to stable and secure resources over time, which materially disadvantages them and further limits their agency on the job (Mishel, Bernstein and Shierholz 2009; Perrucci and Wysong 2003).

This is an area of concern, as the relationships formed by managers with lower-skilled workers and specialists in working situations are different. Because of the similarities in psychological contracts, specialists and managers can gain greater understanding than lower-skilled workers and managers. This incongruence in perceived obligations may cause the perception of contract breach, which may result in job dissatisfaction

The patterns of employer obligations were similar between different work status groups. The perception of employers' obligations toward employees wasn't so much influenced by one's position in an organization or by any other context variable. This is the opposite of employee obligations, where position had significant influence on the strength of obligations. There were few or statistically non-significant differences in expectations about employer obligations toward an employee. Position predicted the strength of four employer obligations. The higher the position, the more employees expected their employer to be employee-centered; they wanted their employer to support their individual and professional development, establish with them long-term stable relations, and give the right and freedom to make decisions concerning their work.

In the set of employee obligations, organization size didn't explain the variances in obligation strengths, but it had some explanatory power in the set of employer obligations. The relationships indicated that workers in smaller organizations expect stronger commitments from their employers in the domain of organizational support and empowerment. And in bigger organizations employees expect their employees to be more concerned with employee problems and needs.

In general, the perception of employer obligations was very similar between different work status groups and contextual variables had low explanatory power for obligations strengths variance. The data of this study about employer obligations indicate that these obligations are formed based on more general social understandings, as the variance in strength and patterns of obligations were low

between individuals. Roehling's (2008) notion that employee beliefs about employer obligations are often based on very basic social norms and moral principles supports this finding. There exists the possibility of a causal connection between perceived employer obligations and broader socio-economic norms and values. Ho's (2005) findings confirm these results. She found that social values and referents play a major role in shaping employee evaluations of psychological contract fulfillment. The choice of social referent impacts the perception of reward satisfaction and distributive fairness. It can mean that employee obligations are the question of individual values, interests and needs and employer obligations are the question of broader social norms and interests. This indicates that concrete organization and ongoing employment relationships may have a weaker effect on workers' expectations concerning employer obligations to employees. Deery et al. (2006) suggest that psychological contracts have both an individual and a collective dimension. Employee contractual evaluations are likely to be affected by social and work group norms. Social norms are collectively agreed interpretations of an organization's behavior. This means that it is difficult if not impossible to control and conduct these obligations formed outside the organization. These are broader and more general in nature and governed by broader social and economic processes.

High scores show that respondents are quite demanding to their employers; they expect their employers to be committed to them on a large scale of obligations. Obligations were highest in the managers groups. Obligations were highest in the Stable working conditions, Empowerment, and Organizational support dimensions. The workers group's expectations in regard to employer obligations were highest in Stable working conditions, Equal treatment, and Long-term relations. They expect that their employers offer them stable and secure work conditions and environment and the uniform treatment of all employees. These obligations were rated slightly higher than in the managers group.

The managers groups differed from other work status groups as their own obligations were as high as their expectations toward their employers. The workers group had relatively low obligations toward their organization but in return expected relatively strong commitments from their employers. The workers group doesn't hold a balanced form of psychological contracts. Shore and Barksdale (1998), studying interrelations between employee and employer obligations, identified four types of interrelations. They categorized psychological contracts into four types based on the extent to which there is balance in obligations and on the degree to which the parties are perceived to be obligated – mutual high obligation, mutual low obligation, and employee over-obligation and employee under-obligation. The latter is characteristic to psychological contract form developed by the lower-skilled workers group. Both managers groups showed mutual high obligation forms; they are more demanding toward themselves and expect strong commitment in return from their organization.

3.1.3. Third proposition

The third proposition stated that individual work values and the meaning of working may have an increasing or decreasing effect on perceived obligation strength.

This proposition was fully confirmed, although the values' explanatory power was relatively weak in explaining the variances in employer obligations. The case of employer obligations will be discussed at length in the next chapter.

Work values and the meaning of working were the strongest factors in the analyses of this study predicting the strength and importance of both obligations. For employee obligations they are strong and substantial factors and for employer obligations they are weak, but still the strongest among all factors used in this study.

The present study identified the importance of the impact of work values in shaping individual psychological contracts, namely the strength of taken obligations and the expected commitments of employers. It is important to understand where these values might diverge among work group members and between managers and employees. Work values will shape how individuals interact with other employees and managers, how they interpret information, and the importance they place on work outcomes and different aspects in employment relationships.

Work values in this study were measured on two basic facets of work values: (a) modality of the work outcome – the outcomes can be instrumental, cognitive or social-affective; and (b) system-performance contingency – whether the outcome is contingent upon performance (reward); the employee has to earn them and they are usually provided after task performance or upon membership in the organization, which is earned merely through membership in the system.

The study results showed that individual work values predicted more significant variances in employee obligations than in employer obligations, and the composition of values was different. The strongest predictor for employee obligations strengths was intrinsic (cognitive) value and the weakest predictors were affective values and autonomy. Other values had different rate relationships with different employee obligations. For employer obligation strengths, the strongest predictors were social values and affective values and also intrinsic values, but these relationships were weaker than with employee obligations. Power values weren't related with any employer obligations and work conditions were related only with one obligation. Also relationships with other values were few and weak.

Work values' influence variety on employee obligations is greater, which means that obligations that employees perceive to have toward their employer are carried more by their personal values. This is quite expectable, as work values by definition are general and relatively stable goals that people try to reach through work. Individuals usually modify their behavior in such a way that is most likely to lead them to attain these goals. Managers and human resource practitioners should incorporate greater job enrichment values into the job design process and take more serious notice of

workers' individual interests and objectives in the performance management process. Performance is influenced by expectations concerning future events.

Employer obligation strength was more influenced by the values that connect people with others and with the organization. Social values had relationships with all employer obligations and Affective values with all but two. Autonomy was negatively related to all obligations with which it had relationships. The results indicate that employee obligations are influenced more by performance-related values (intrinsic values and work variety) but the perceived employer obligations are influenced by emotional values, which describe more organization/collective-centered behavior. If a person values emotional aspects in their work, then they expect their employers to offer more support in dealing with changes and with individual needs and problems.

An important result that needs attention is that affective values (including respect, recognition, pleasurable work, appreciation) were positively related to employer obligations and not to employee obligations. One can assume that these values can be met through fulfillment of the employer's obligations. Although this study didn't investigate these kinds of relations, more attention should be paid to these connections in regard to psychological contract breach, as the strength of these values can shape a person's reactions to breach.

A noteworthy fact is that employer obligations sets had negative relations with gender and age; it means that younger men expected their employer to have stronger obligations to them than women.

The meaning of work was measured with two constructs, work centrality and job involvement. These were handled as two different concepts (Paullay et al. 1994). Work centrality is broader in scope and reflects the importance of work in general. Job involvement refers to the extent to which people identify with their job, but concern the job that a person currently has. Persons with high work centrality value work and are willing to allocate their resources to work, and to invest in building a mutual relationship with their organization (Grant and Wade-Benzoni, 2009).

Two interesting findings about the relations of the meaning of work components with psychological contract obligations deserve to be highlighted. First, job involvement acted in a similar way as intrinsic values. Job involvement was significantly and relatively strongly related with all employee obligations and with six employer obligations. The latter relations were weaker than with employee obligations. The strength of relations were similar with these intrinsic values with both employee and employer obligations. Correlation analysis of values and the meaning of working indicate positive correlations between intrinsic values and job involvement and that was the second strongest correlation, as the interrelationship between job involvement and social values was slightly stronger.

In regard to employee obligations, intrinsic values and job involvement were making relatively larger contributions to the prediction models; their explanatory power was somewhat weaker in predicting variance in employer obligation strength. These relations can be perceived as more general, that they influence the

overall strength of employee obligations. This can be interpreted as the stronger the job involvement and intrinsic values, the stronger the willingness to take responsibilities.

Intrinsic work values focus on the process of work—the intangible rewards that reflect the inherent interest in the work, the learning potential, and the opportunity to be creative and challenging (Ryan & Deci, 2000), and whether the worker can take responsibility for his labor (Ros et al. 1999). It is mostly a cognitive process concerning the contribution made. Job involvement, however, is an individual's psychological identification or commitment to his/her job (Kanungo, 1982) and reflects the degree to which one is engaged in and concerned with one's present job (Paullay et al., 1994). Intrinsic values reflect cognitive, and job involvement more emotional relatedness to one's work. This relatedness of job involvement and intrinsic values to all obligation dimensions indicates the need to clearly identify their multidimensional meaning when examining their influence in future research.

The second finding concerns *work centrality*, which was connected only with employee obligations and didn't influence the strength of employee obligations as expected. It influenced only the behavior of the employee. This finding confirms the results of earlier works, which have found that employees with high work centrality invest in their work and their relationship with the organization (Bal and Kooij 2011; Grant and Wade-Benzoni, 2009; Hobfoll, 2002; Rousseau and Parks, 1993), but these studies didn't investigate the employer obligations side of the relationship. It is important in the future to investigate more the relationships between the obligations an employee expects his/her employer to have toward him/her and the employee's work centrality.

3.1.4. Fourth proposition

The fourth proposition posed that differences between managers' and employees' perceptions of obligations and differences between obligations as seen from different managers' perspectives are heavily influenced by a manager's own psychological contracts.

This proposition was fully confirmed.

An important issue in psychological contract and employment relations is whether the content of the exchange (inducements provided for contributions given) is recognized and similarly understood by the parties to the employment relations. Research on performance appraisal and feedback has shown that employees and managers often do not agree on employee performance (Coyle-Shapiro and Shore 2007). There is a possibility that the representatives of the organization and the employee don't have a common understanding of the relationship itself.

This study's results showed that the biggest differences in psychological contracts were between work status groups. Managers' psychological contract type and obligation profile differed significantly from lower-skilled workers' psychological contracts and to some extent from specialists' psychological contracts. Differences

between managers groups were relatively small. In the first study, middle and senior managers held employee over-obligation type psychological contracts. These groups had substantially higher employee obligations than employer obligations; they expected less from their employers than they themselves were ready to contribute. Other work status groups held mutual low psychological contract types. They bond with organizations through passive loyalty, letting employers conduct their behavior. On average they aren't ready to take a risk in employment relations.

In the second study, middle and senior managers held mutual high type psychological contracts. Supervisors (first level managers) had balanced type psychological contracts and obligations were of medium strength. Specialists and lower-skilled workers held employee under-obligation type psychological contracts, which are unbalanced contracts and refer to an exchange in which the organization's obligations outweigh the employee's obligations. These groups were less eager to contribute to the organization, but expected the organization to have strong commitments toward them.

Differences in employee obligations between work status groups were bigger than differences in employer obligations. Lower-skilled workers in both studies rated transactional type obligations higher than other groups. They felt they were obliged to perform exactly in the ways expected and were ready to take responsibility only in the framework of determined work tasks. They are ready to make promises only within the framework of explicitly agreed conditions and terms. Relatively low were obligations in dimensions that represent independence, initiative and autonomy. Middle and senior managers felt more responsibility to deal with organizational problems and were ready to put more effort into keeping one's performance and employability on a high level. Low obligations in explicitly defined relations indicate that managers expect to have relations based on mutual trust and interests. Specialists and supervisors had a quite similar employee obligations pattern. The biggest difference with managers was in the strength of obligations, which were related with dealing with organization problems and keeping one's employability high. And differences with lower-skilled workers stood in the higher importance they attributed to volition, dynamic performance and personal contribution. Keeping social relations on a high level was important to all work status groups.

This similarity between the specialists and supervisors groups may come from the fact that supervisors are often promoted from within and are unlikely to have formal management education. Typically the supervisor has significant experience doing the work of the individuals he/she supervises. The supervisor is a first level management job and has responsibility to a higher level of management, and that may make them feel and behave more often like employees than managers. Small differences can also be explained by the assumption that changes taking place in specialists' working situations and conditions are similar to changes on lower managerial levels.

The patterns of employer obligations were similar between different work status groups in both studies. There were few or statistically non-significant differences in

expectations about employer obligations toward an employee. Differences between all work status groups were found in only two dimensions: Specified working terms and Empowerment. Lower-skilled workers and specialists perceived more than managerial groups that their employers are obligated to provide unambiguously defined, explicitly specified and clearly observable working terms where responsibility and reward systems are clear and stable. But in general, the perception of the employer's obligations toward employees wasn't influenced by one's position in an organization.

This similarity in employer obligations and differences in employee obligations raises the question of different factors affecting the development of these different obligations. Employee obligations are related to a person's individual performance and assumably are more influenced by personal factors and by the relationship with the immediate manager. Employer obligations can be perceived as more general and impersonal obligations. These obligations are connected with the organizational strategy implemented and culture and human resource practices. Perception of these obligations can be more influenced by socialization processes. According to Morrison and Robinson (1997), organizational socialization is a factor that will affect the degree of similarity between an employee's schema regarding the employment relationship and the schema held by organizational agents. This should minimize differences on an organizational level. But as the samples for both studies included respondents from different organizations all over Estonia and the perception of employer obligations was very similar across different groups, then there has to be another explanation for that phenomenon. The analysis of psychological contracts formation and development stages (Rousseau 2001) has revealed three kind of factors that are involved – societal (macro-level), organizational (meso-level), and individual (micro-level) factors (DeVos 2002; Conway and Binder, 2005). In this case organizational and individual factors presumably have a weaker impact on the formation of employer obligations in psychological contracts as social factors, as diverse samples were engaged. Societal factors comprise economic, legal, political and cultural factors. Cultural factors in turn also include such factors as perceptions about employer-employee obligations (Thomas, Au and Ravlin 2003). Rousseau and Schalk, already in the year 2000, stated that employment relationships are becoming more idiosyncratic between people and more directly shaped by market-related factors. And even earlier Herriot and his colleagues (1997), when analyzing the results of their study, concluded that it may be possible that in one national culture there can be a considerable level of agreement about what the psychological contract consists of.

This finding raises an issue of concern. Employers' understandings of employee obligations and employer obligations toward employees don't match with lower-skilled workers' and specialists' psychological contracts. The differences are bigger in the employee obligations domain and appreciably smaller in the employer obligation domain. The way in which employers expect employees to behave and perform is different from the obligations and responsibilities employees perceive themselves to have. This is a fruitful base for miscommunication and

misinterpretation. Previous studies have evidenced that managers and employees do not always agree on what is exchanged (Lester et al. 2002; Tekleab and Taylor 2003) in this study it concerns more employee obligations. A better understanding exists about employer obligations.

The few small differences between the managers' two perspectives in all managers groups (as employee and as employer representative) in most of the psychological contract dimensions suggest that a manager's own psychological contract has a strong impact on the formation of expectations concerning employee obligations toward the organization and of the organization's obligations toward its workers. The direction of influence is still not obvious. Although individual psychological contracts form earlier and are shaped by both pre-employment and organization factors, managers also may adopt employer psychological contracts based on organizational strategy. In this case they act as agents of the organization. There is still not enough evidence about the influence of a manager's self-interests on their behavior and decisions as representatives of the organization. Hallier and James (1997) have found that it is not always easy for managers to represent their own and employees' interests simultaneously. A manager's own self-interests may exert an influence on how they, as organizational representatives, manage employment relationships with employees.

Morrison and Robinson (1997) have named three interrelated reasons why employees and employers hold different perceptions about mutual obligations. One is that employees and managers enter into employment relationships with different cognitive schemata or with different starting assumptions and expectations about mutual obligations. The pre-employment experiences and prior work experiences of employees and managers will shape their beliefs and expectations regarding the employment relationship. These belief systems will in turn influence their individual perceptions of the obligations in a given employment relationship. Employees' and managers' psychological contracts differ not only because of their different experiences, but also because of their different roles and vantage points in the relationship. The second reason stands in employment agreements, which usually are complex and as a result are subject to interpretation and sense-making. These processes are inherently subjective and imperfect. Employees may interpret these agreements and terms according to their own interests and career goals. They may focus more on things that they believe their employers are obligated to offer them. Employers, in contrast, may focus more on employee obligations. The third reason lies in poor or insufficient communication.

Employment relationships are largely based on managers sending messages about expectations and obligations and employees receiving and interpreting them. An employer must take responsibility for the messages it sends via its managers and coworkers, because as the managers are seen to act and communicate, so the organization is seen to act. Greater clarity of obligations is positively associated with more qualitative communication. The more an employee talks and interacts with representatives of the organization, the more likely it is that the employee and organizational agents will minimize inconsistent perceptions of the promised

obligations between them. A more explicit contract results in increased fairness and trust (Herriot and Pemberton 1997). A problem arises when the messages about obligations and evaluations don't match with the worker's psychological contract. In this case it's easy for the worker to perceive his/her psychological contracts been breached. This implies that managers on all levels (as organizational representatives) need to be more aware of and responsive to employees' psychological contracts. Managers have to approve employees' perceived obligations and fulfill the organization's obligations toward employees. At the same time managers have to be aware of their own psychological contract and its impact on expectations, promises made, and evaluations of employees' performance and behavior in the organization.

As a general rule, most employees would prefer to have higher-quality rather than lower-quality exchange relationships with their supervisor (Vecchio 1995). However, not all employees want to have a higher-quality exchange relationship with their supervisor and therefore they don't resent their lower-quality status. Harris and Kacmar (2006) point out that there are also costs associated with developing higher-quality relationships. Employees in high-quality relationships are likely to be given additional roles to fulfill beyond their formal job descriptions, and may be expected to produce higher quality work and make greater contributions and, as a result, may experience higher levels of stress associated with these extra duties (Gerstner and Day 1997; Harris and Kacmar 2006). The results of the study show that although lower-skilled workers feel obligated to have open social relations and to cooperate with co-workers and want to feel valued and be personally recognized for their contribution to the success of the organization, at the same time they don't want to take more responsibilities than specified with their work tasks and contract terms. They also show low readiness to be engaged with organizational concerns. This can be a case of what Bolino and Turnley (2009) have suggested: that there may be circumstances where the costs of fostering a higher-quality relationship would not be worth it to the employee, and employees might prefer lower-quality exchange relationships with their supervisors because the tradeoffs involved in developing higher-quality relationships are too great. Every social relationship has at least two parties; in employment relationship the two parties usually are the employee and his/her immediate manager. According to leader-member exchange theory, supervisors generally develop strong relationships with their subordinates because of the subordinate's competence and skill, trustworthiness, and willingness to take on additional responsibilities (Liden et al. 1997). If employees don't express willingness to make commitments to the organization then managers aren't motivated to create high-quality relationships.

3.2. Practical implications

The study results have several practical implications.

The first implication concerns psychological contract management. The key issue for managers is how to manage psychological contracts in a way that the dysfunctional consequences of breach are minimized and the needs of employees and organizations are unified in a constructive way. The results confirm the importance of psychological contracts in modifying a person's behavior at work and in the organization and have a significant impact on employment outcomes, which in turn affect behavior and performance. This refers to the need for employers to understand employees' perceptions of the content of the psychological contract and where circumstances permit, they should try to alter the terms of the contract to match the person's psychological contract. The study results showed that the more employees live up to their own standards, the higher the satisfaction with career and job.

Changes in employment relationships come from two main sources, but the influence is mutual. Employee needs and behavior have changed and the management practice has changed. Changes in management practice are mainly caused by the abandonment of life-long employment obligations and position-based pay, and exercising greater workplace flexibility and performance-based pay (Guest 1998). Employment relations tend to become less collective and the rate of idiosyncratic deals increases. Psychological contracts are inherent to these deals. This provides employers with the challenge of managing greater complexity and increases the possibility of incongruity between promises and their fulfillment, and consequently increases the potential for perceived violation of psychological contracts. Herriot and Pemberton (1997) argue that the key focus should be on the negotiation of the deal as an ongoing process. This process should be made explicit and transactional and recognized as a central part of activities such as day-to-day feedback and performance appraisal.

Research on psychological contract formation has shown that psychological contracts are heavily shaped at the time of pre-employment negotiation and at entry (e.g. Rousseau 1990, 2001; De Vos et al. 2003, Sutton and Griffin 2004). Many of the issues shaping psychological contracts are explicitly or implicitly addressed during the selection and recruitment phases (Mael and Ashforth 1995; Robinson and Morrison 2000). Knowing different employee groups' priorities and perspectives can enforce better results for the recruitment and selection process, as candidates will be more likely to match the organization's expectations and newcomers may more easily identify themselves with the organization when they are being provided with what they regard as important.

Although communicating the psychological contract during the recruitment process is important, the ongoing interaction between the employer and the employee in relation to the job and to personal issues such as workload, job crafting, development, work-life balance, and career prospects help to establish and clarify expectations with employees. Individuals are typically hired by the organization to

perform a specific job and they fulfill certain roles which are attached to the position. But in reality one's role may expand to include various idiosyncratic elements that are only related to the specific job. Realistic job previews are as important as realistic perceptions of ongoing relations and obligations to avoid perceptions of either unmet expectations or the breach of promises and commitments. Clearly stated and communicated mutual obligations help to define one's role and provide a basis for involvement with organization. Morrison and Robinson (1997) have highlighted that the lack of communication is likely to lead to incongruence between employer and employee perceptions of obligations, which is one of the causes of psychological contract breach. The study results showed that a psychological contract's state (trust in employer and mutual obligation fulfillment) had significant influence on career and job satisfaction.

Psychological contracts need to change over time. This process will be successful if there are appropriate rewards that support the revision of psychological contracts. Workers have to have clear knowledge of the gains to be accessed under the new arrangements as well as knowledge of the consequences for not changing.

Psychological contracts are more easily managed in the organization if a greater number of human resource practices is used with a majority of the workforce. Study results showed that not all proposed psychological contract dimensions were considered equally important. Organization management should consider how these dimensions, important to employees, can be utilized to explore different approaches to human resource management. These practices should recognize employee concerns about job and employment security and their need to build up their employability. Employees should be helped to develop occupational and personal skills, become more proactive, and take more responsibility for their own careers. The most mentioned practices are opportunities for training and development, a safe working environment, feedback on performance and regular employee performance appraisals, fair treatment, and provisions to help employees deal with non-work responsibilities (work-life balance). Managing psychological contracts well depends much on the abilities of the line managers. John Purcell's (Purcell et al 2003) study found that the quality of line management was fundamental to extracting performance benefits from human resource policies and practices. One of the biggest challenges for human resources is to support line managers in their responsibilities for managing and developing their people.

The second important issue for management is whether the content of the exchange (inducements provided for contributions given) in the psychological contract are recognized and similarly understood by the parties to the employment relation. There is some evidence from earlier works that managers and employees do not agree on what is exchanged (Lester et al. 2002; Tekleab and Taylor 2003). The results of this study confirm the earlier findings, as there are quite remarkable differences in employees' and managers' psychological contracts, and managers' own psychological contracts shape expectations about employee and employer obligations.

The overall question is about the form of psychological contract held by management, what it is that they seek to communicate, and how they seek to communicate it. Usually there are two ways to communicate the expectations of the organization (employee obligations) and in return offered incentives (employer obligations) for employees' contributions. An integrated model is likely to emphasize top-down communication directed at all employees and more precise communication to newcomers to ensure their effective socialization into the norms and values of the organization. The second way is one-to-one negotiation of the psychological contract. These managers accept a differentiation model and place less emphasis on standardized, top-down communication and are more concerned with the work and the wellbeing of individuals. Whatever the chosen way of communication, effective organizational communication will lead to more explicit and potentially more effective psychological contract as more explicit expectations and promises are better manageable.

Research on performance appraisal and feedback has shown that employees and managers often do not agree on employee performance (Coyle-Shapiro and Shore 2007) and there is a possibility that the agents of the organization and employees don't have a common understanding of the relationship itself. This is an area of concern as the expectations about mutual obligations differ in varying degrees between lower-skilled workers and their managers and between specialists and managers. Because of the similarities in psychological contracts, specialists and managers can gain greater understanding than lower-skilled workers and managers. Lower-skilled workers' preferred psychological contracts differ dramatically from psychological contracts held by managers and are also different compared to those of other work status groups. Due to these differences, lower-skilled workers perceive or/and experience more often the violation of psychological contracts. This makes it harder for managers to motivate and engage these workers. They are also less satisfied with their job and career, as employee career and job satisfaction were more influenced by the employer's fulfillment of its obligations than by the fulfillment of their own obligations.

They show willingness to take responsibility only in the frames of clearly defined and specified work tasks and are ready to keep promises only within the framework of explicitly agreed conditions and terms. They feel an obligation to perform on a collective basis, to act in the interests of the organization and to respond to changing conditions. Representatives of this group are less engaged and feel less obliged toward the organization. Obligations were relatively low in dimensions that represent independence, initiative and autonomy. Managers showed quite the opposite pattern of obligations. Managers are eager to take responsibility for their own ability to perform well, to make personal contributions, and to align own behavior in accordance with the organization's interests and needs. Managers expect to have relations based on mutual trust and interests. Although psychological contracts are subjective, the organization provides the context for the creation of contract. Management usually fosters the particular types of employee psychological contracts it wants employees to embrace (Rousseau 1989, 1999;

Rousseau and Ho 2000). This is done through incentives, means of rewards, and other HR practices. This is the reason why managers should be aware of their own psychological contracts and capable of reflecting on their own reactions and behavior. Differences in psychological contracts are likely to reduce shared understandings; different frames of reference give way to different evaluations. The differences in obligations between groups is a challenge for managers: supporting lower-skilled workers to allow them to first perform the stated duties and tasks of their job, and second enable them to do more than is specifically articulated in their job description (Litchfield, Swanberg, Sigworth, 2004; Saunders, 2006), which is necessary for an organization to gain competitive advantages.

The third practical implication of this study rests upon the possibility of a causal connection between perceived employer obligations and broader socio-economic norms and values. Study results show little differences in employer obligations (commitments that employees attribute to their employers) between different work groups. Ho's (2005) findings confirm these results. She found that social values and referents play a major role in shaping employee evaluations of psychological contract fulfillment. The choice of social referent impacts the perception of reward satisfaction and distributive fairness. It can mean that employee obligations are a question of individual values, interests and needs, and employer obligations are a question of broader social norms and interests. This indicates that concrete a organization and ongoing employment relationships may have a weaker effect on workers' expectations concerning employer obligations to employees. Deery et al. (2006) suggest that psychological contracts have both an individual and a collective dimension. Employee contractual evaluations are likely to be affected by social and work group norms. Social norms are collectively agreed interpretations of an organization's behavior. This means that it is difficult if not impossible to control and conduct these obligations formed outside the organization. These are broader and more general in nature and governed by broader social and economic processes.

The more organizations are aware of these expectations, the more they can align their behavior and human resource practices with these norms and changes. Employer obligations vary in terms of the ease and cost by which they can be altered and applied (Coyle-Shapiro and Kessler 2000), and therefore organizations should more clearly state their values and human resource policies and their ability to enact these. Consequently, employers/managers need to communicate to employees the underlying reasons for non-fulfillment of some obligations or for the delay of fulfillment. Guest and Conway (2002) have stressed the importance of communication. They state that communication has a significant role in managing psychological contracts. However, top-down communication has a less positive effect—two-way communication is needed.

3.3. Directions for future research

Despite the further mentioned limitations, the study extends our understanding of employee and managerial perspectives on the psychological contract and brings out new perspectives for future researches.

This study handled the sample in a generalized form; economic activities weren't distinguished. One can expect differences in psychological contracts in different economic activity fields. Therefore it is important in future research to also consider the differences between economic activities, as job demands and employment relationships are different based on the area of activity, and changes in work and employment relations aren't equal within different economic sectors.

The study is correlational in nature and consequently the results cannot indicate the causality. In future research it is important to study the direction of the influence of different key variables, namely position and job involvement. Future research could explore the moderating effect of position between individual characteristics and employee and employer obligations. In this study human resource practices weren't included, but to explain the results regarding employer obligations, research on the effects of human resource practices on the formation of psychological contracts in an organization is needed. Longitudinal and experimental methods should be used to explore the nature of these causal relationships. The same applies to more broad social, legal and economic factors, which influence the perception of employer obligations. Today we don't know these broader factors, their influence and interdependences.

This study investigated the relations between proposed antecedences and psychological contract formation and outcomes and didn't include psychological contract breach. Future research should focus on perceived psychological contract breach as it is an important subject for psychological contract and performance management.

Despite its limitations the study has some notable strengths. First, this study is the first large-scale study to investigate psychological contracts in Estonia. It investigates the antecedents and consequences of psychological contracts using an experienced and occupationally diverse sample of employees covering three main economic sectors. Second, the contribution lies in the inclusion of the employer perspective. Very few studies have been done, and none in Estonia, to investigate employers' perceptions of employees' psychological contracts. By including the employer's perspective, mutuality in the exchange between employee and employer can be explored. These results permit one to understand the potential causes of tension and misunderstandings in employment relations. Third, feature-oriented measure was used to investigate psychological contracts. Feature-oriented measures contain content of common interests, which permits one to study psychological contracts across persons and settings and to compare and generalize the results. This approach also provides a possibility to have a more holistic picture of psychological contracts.

3.4. Final conclusions

The current study has both theoretical and practical implications. Theoretical implications concern feature-based psychological contract measures that will be discussed here and practical implications concern the management of psychological contracts. Practical implications have been discussed in previous sections and in this final section only a brief overview is given of the psychology contract types that are dominant today in Estonia. In addition to these, some core findings will be highlighted.

The question of feature dimensions bi-polarity

The questionnaires used in the two studies differed in item numbers (items were added for the second study) and some items were reworded to make the idea of the item clearer. The theoretical framework wasn't changed and the factor structure of these two questionnaires was the same. This permits us to make some general conclusions including both questionnaires.

One question rose about the bipolarity of dimensions. The correlations between the dimensions representing the opposite sides of features brought up questions about the assumptions that features reflect bipolar dimensions and that assessing the presence of one assumes the absence of the other as proposed by Sels et al. (2004). The two dimensions of the Stability-flexibility feature are two opposing ideas. Correlation analysis shows that these dimensions (Stable working conditions and Flexibility) of employer obligations are significantly and positively correlated, and the correlation is quite strong. By the theoretical model, flexibility is associated with the employee's ability to make decisions and act in his/her own interests to cope with organizational changes and changed job demands. Stability is secured by interdependent relations and involves mutual support and collective adaptation to the environment. To survive, organizations today are simultaneously trying to secure flexibility and stability. According to Rousseau and Arthur's (1999) notion that flexibility is secured in the form of employees' and organizations' timely responses to market changes and stability is gained by socializing, retaining and developing people whose abilities and knowledge are critical to the organization, the results can be interpreted as flexibility being possible in situations where stability is secured. To change one's behavior or habits or to acquire new skills or knowledge, the person needs to perceive that established relations and agreements are stable.

The second pair of opposite dimensions representing employer obligations on the contract level were Empowerment and Equal treatment. The relationship between them is significant, positive and with medium. Items in this dimension were designed to measure the opposites. Empowerment described managers' behavior in giving employees more rights to decide, and encouraging independence and taking more responsibility. Equal treatment, in contrast, stresses equal treatment and collective behavior.

One explanation for the connectedness of these dimensions lies in Siegall and Gardner's (1999) study results. Interpreting results for psychological empowerment, they found that a supportive work environment, together with a culture where employees see that their colleagues are concerned with the firm's outcomes, help people internalize the importance of their contributions to the company. They believe that a supportive work environment is one in which valued vertical communication occurs and cooperative horizontal relationships exist, which is important in order for managers to achieve employee empowerment. The second explanation may lie in Estonian history. Twenty years ago our working culture was collective in nature, and although our unionization rate is still very low, a large proportion of employees are of the opinion that the main issues collective agreements should cover are the organization of work and working conditions, as well as occupational health and safety (Eesti ... 2011). These are all important contextual variables for the empowering process.

In the set of employee obligations one dimension was split into two opposite obligations, Enhancing employability and Focus on organizational needs. These dimensions represent the focus dimension. The focus dimension is considered to measure the extent to which the employee is engaged with organizational or individual concerns. The results indicate that these obligations aren't mutually exclusive.

Additional research is needed in order to identify the rationality of designing feature-oriented measures with dimensions representing only one side of the bipolar dimension. Future research should identify whether it is more effective to measure features independently, rather than assuming that they fall on opposite poles of continuum. One quite recent study (McInnis et al. 2009) controlled the bipolarity of feature dimensions. They developed a measure containing nine features, each with two items representing the bipolar ends of the dimensions. They couldn't find negative correlations between the two feature pairings – scope and flexibility-stability. The latter was problematic also in this study. Many of the other feature pairings didn't show strong negative correlations, which made the interpretation of polarity problematic.

Position in organization and work values and job involvement are the strongest predictors of differences in perceived obligations strengths

An important bit of knowledge obtained through this study is the importance of position (work status) in an organization in shaping employees' psychological contracts. The biggest differences in psychological contracts were revealed between work status groups. Lower-skilled workers showed the most different pattern of employee and employer obligations, which means that they relate differently to the organization than other employees.

The second important fact is that work values and job involvement have substantial influence on the strength of employee obligations. The explanatory power of work values and job involvement in explaining the variances was relatively high in

employee obligations and low in employer obligations. Analysis of employee obligations revealed that all employee obligations had significant associations with intrinsic work values and with job satisfaction. These relations can be perceived as more general and it can be assumed that they influence the overall strength of employee obligations and the willingness to take responsibilities. Employees' relatedness to employer obligations was more emotional. Affective work values (including respect, recognition, pleasurable work, appreciation) were positively related to employer obligations and not to employee obligations.

These findings have two implications. First, it is important to understand how psychological contracts are formed and what are the roles of pre-employment factors and the information and feedback employees get in their current employment relationship. Pre-employment beliefs and goals usually determine the choices a person makes in regard to his/her vocation and job. Past work experiences can also contribute to the formation of psychological contracts. But of equal importance seems to be the current working situation and experiences in the workplace. The nature of one's work is important to consider. Very often one's work position in an organization determines the quality, content and amount of information a person receives. How a person interprets the information will shape his/her understandings of contract terms. Human resource practices also mustn't be ignored.

The second implication concerns how these different psychological contracts are managed. To get the desired contributions from their employees, employers must provide appropriate inducements. Without knowing the preferred psychological contracts of employees, it's not easy for managers to know what kinds of inducements will influence employees to perform in the desired way. According to study results, work values are important determinants of employee obligations. Work values are important elements in an individual's frame of reference and are commonly considered normative standards to judge and choose among alternative modes of behavior. When offering inducements, managers have to consider worker needs, goals and values, as different inducements can affect different employees in different ways and therefore the incentives offered should match with the things employees considers important.

To avoid problems in employment relationships and psychological contract breach, managers should be more reflective in regard of their own psychological contracts, as these have a strong impact on the perception of employee psychological contracts. Their understandings and expectations of employee obligations and behavior don't match with the preferred forms of employees' psychological contracts. Quality communication with employees and the resulting behavior, in the form of negotiation, discussion and sense-making, make it easier to make sense of agreement terms and of the existing psychological contract.

Lower-skilled workers' psychological contract obligation profile doesn't support the employability need.

It is hard to predict changes in the global market and changes in labor market requirements. Flexibility in functioning has become the key criterion for both organizations and employees to remain competitive. An organization's capability to perform on the market and adapt to changing circumstances depends much on its employees' capabilities to not only develop and maintain fundamental qualifications, but also acquire new skills. Market demands and job qualifications are continuously changing at an increasing rate and the qualifications that are required for a job are becoming more complex. Therefore continuously developing competence even within a certain field is the key to guaranteeing an employee's employability in both the internal and external labor market.

Study results showed that lower-skilled workers in both studies rated transactional type obligations higher than other groups. They felt they were obliged to perform exactly in the ways expected and were ready to take responsibility only in the frames of determined work tasks. They were ready to make promises only within the framework of explicitly agreed conditions and terms. Obligations in dimensions that represent independence, initiative and autonomy were relatively low. Their level of obligation was significantly lower than what employers expect from their employees. These beliefs may restrain the necessary flexibility and inhibit the development of job qualifications or the maintenance of qualification on the required level. Lower-skilled workers are less committed to the organization's needs and are also more passive in negotiations over their employment and work conditions.

In human resource practices, training and career development are used to guarantee employees' employability and their functional flexibility. As the name lower-skilled work indicates, working in these positions requires less knowledge and skills and if some kind of qualification is needed, it is usually quite easily and quickly acquired. Therefore there exists a risk that these workers are offered fewer opportunities to develop or maintain their employability. And at the same time, these workers may also be more passive in inquiring about or applying for trainings.

Employee beliefs and expectations in regard to employer obligations are influenced by more broad societal factors

The third issue to be aware of is the possibility that employee expectations in regard to employer obligations are more influenced by broader social and economic factors, which are difficult if not impossible for the organizations to control. Study results showed that the different proposed factors (individual characteristics, organizational variables and work values) didn't succeed in explaining variances in employer obligations. Low explanatory power indicates that there are other factors not included in the proposed model that exert influence. Human resource practices and broader societal factors were not included. Although there is plenty of evidence that human resource practices influence employees' attitudes and behavior, in this

study it isn't the case. The samples for both studies included respondents from different organizations all over Estonia and the perception of employer obligations was very similar across different groups. It is naive to think that all organizations in Estonia implement similar employee-organization relationship strategies, therefore there has to be another explanation for that phenomenon.

On the societal level there are two categories of factors affecting the perception of people with regard of their work. The first is more explicit and comprises employment laws, policies and regulations. These provide rules for employers regarding what they should provide for their workers and what they must not do. The second category is more implicit and consists of belief systems that underlay national cultures. These belief systems include the understandings of what inducements are culturally accepted. But they also influence other factors. They may determine what kinds of skills and competences are valued, the importance of career, the degree of loyalty, etc. The broader societal context influences the size of human resource practices – the number of inducements that are available to employers – and the content of human resource practices – the nature of inducements. The kind of inducements employers choose will influence the kind of employment relationships they have with their employees. Human resource practices should include the inducements valued by larger social beliefs/values but choices should be made based on organizations' employee-organization relationship strategies.

Dominant psychological contract types in Estonia are unbalanced contracts

This study is one of the first to explore psychological contracts in Estonia and investigate the relationships between individual and work contextual factors and the two sets of psychological contract perceived obligations. To better manage the changed employment relationships, one needs to know and identify the antecedents, moderators and the consequences of psychological contracts that shape and reflect employment relations.

Psychological contracts were measured with a feature-oriented instrument that permits one to have a more holistic picture and to generalize and compare the results. The study has illustrated the need to be aware of gender and age when investigating or managing employee psychological contracts, as these variables may reflect differences or similarities in employees' obligations.

Data for this thesis were gathered in two time periods and the periods differed by broader economic conditions. The first study fell into the economic growth period and data for the second study were gathered in the deepening economic recession period. Although in the second study a modified questionnaire was used (some items were reworded), the results can be compared on a more general base. The psychological contracts held by respondents revealed a mutual-low contract type. This kind of relationship is described by low mutual investments, employees making few contributions and not expecting much in return from their employer. During the period of economic growth this is in a way understandable, as the labor

market offered plenty of workplaces and work and job security were high. The strongest perceived employee obligations were related to social relationships with co-workers and managers and to volition. They perceived that they have the right and responsibility to define the nature and terms of their psychological contract. It also refers to the input and control the employee perceives himself to have in the process of the formation of the deal. In return, they expected more transactional contract type investments from their employers. They expected that their employers would create working conditions that secure job stability as well as clear and specified working terms.

The second study revealed a different type of psychological contract. The relationship with the employer was unbalanced. Respondents expected their employers to make greater contributions than they themselves felt obliged to make. This is called an employee under-obligation relationship and refers to an exchange in which the organization's obligations outweigh the employee's obligations. According to many researchers, in an unstable working environment where job and work security are low, employees often feel they must protect their employment status by making sure that their contribution to the organization exceeds their obligations. Second study results show the opposite behavior and one can only speculate that in Estonian case the employees may feel themselves as victims of economic recession and blame their employers. This allegation is supported by the profile of employer obligations. Respondents expect that their employers contribute more to creating stable working conditions that guarantee long-term relations. They also see their employers as being obligated to support them in their professional development and with personal problems. In their own behavior they were more focused on organizational needs than the sample in the first study. They also felt more obliged to be flexible in their working behavior and to deal more with their own employability. But as in the first study, they felt obliged to have good relations with co-workers and managers to co-operate and support others.

This type of psychological contract is still not beneficial. Some authors argue that mutual low obligation and imbalanced psychological contracts might be equally harmful and be associated with contract violation. The most beneficial in terms of psychological outcomes is considered the mutual high obligation psychological contract. Satisfaction with one's job and career were relatively low in both studies and the differences between the two time periods were insignificant. This may be a reflection of the contract types held in both periods.

In conclusion, this study has shown that the psychological contract is an important construct in employment relations that shapes a person's behavior in work situations. Results revealed significant differences in employee psychological contracts and evidence was also found of factors that cause these differences. Some questions also arise that require future research.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A Rotated Component Matrix for employee obligations items ^(a,b)

First study

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
olen nõus täitma pidevalt uusi ülesandeid	0,71	0,22						
olen nõus võtma uusi tööalaseid kohustusi	0,64				0,25			
pean suutma kiiresti kohaneda töösituatsioonis asetleidvate muudatustega	0,61	0,31			0,23			
võtan omaks uued tööharjumused, mis muutuvad koos muutustega töös	0,51		0,38					
minu jaoks on loomulik, et minu tööülesanded muutuvad koos organisatsiooni muutumisega X	0,40	0,32	0,36				0,28	0,22
ma pidevalt täiendan end, et parandada oma võimalusi tööturul		0,75			0,26	0,29		
oma oskuste ja teadmiste omandamisel lähtun turu nõudmistest		0,69						
tunnen vastutust enda õppe ja ümberõppe eest		0,67				0,23		
olen nõus osalema tegevustes ja võtma endale kohustusi, mis suurendavad minu võimalusi tööturul	0,25	0,55			0,34			
olen nõus iseseisvalt ja aktiivselt hoidma oma oskused ja teadmised nõutaval tasemel X	0,36	0,39						0,34
jagan alati informatsiooni oma töökaaslastega			0,73					
olen alati valmis tegema koostööd oma kolleegidega	0,22		0,69					
oma käitumise ja tegevuse kujundamisel järgin organisatsiooni tavasid			0,63					0,30
loon ja säilitan häid suhteid oma töökaaslastega			0,52		0,21			
olen nõus abistama ja vajaduse korral asendama oma kolleege nende tegevuses X	0,39	0,35	0,48			0,31		

mind soovad organisatsiooniga vaid minu tööalased kohustused organisatsioon on minu jaoks vaid töö tegemise koht	0,85				
vastutan vaid töölepingus määratletud tööde ja ülesannete eest minu tegevus organisatsioonis on määratletud vaid minu tööülesannete kaudu	0,81				0,32
tunnen kohustust hoida end kursis organisatsiooni arengu, edu ja probleemidega	0,80				-0,28
tunnen kohustust tegeleda organisatsiooni probleemidega ka väljaspool tööaega	0,66	0,91			
tunnen kohustust pingutada organisatsiooni edukuse nimel		0,78	0,22		
tunnen kohustust arendada enda juures organisatsiooni jaoks olulisi oskusi ja teadmisi		0,68	0,24	0,20	0,33
olen nõus võtma endale kohustusi, mis eelkõige on olulised ja vajalikud organisatsioonile X		0,60			0,26
olen nõus oma töö või töökoha muutumisega kui see on vajalik organisatsioonile		0,48			0,36
olen nõus vajaduse korral täitma ülesandeid, mis otseselt ei kuulu minu tööülesannete hulka		0,21	0,71		
olen nõus tegema ületunde kui selleks tekib vajadus		0,34	0,68	0,20	0,21
tunnen kohustust muuta oma töö tulemuslikumaks ja tõhusamaks pidevalt omandan uusi oskusi ja teadmisi, mis suurendavad minu väärtust organisatsiooni jaoks X		0,21	0,64	0,23	
tunnen kohustust selgelt väljendada oma vajadusi ja seda, mis on mulle oluline minu töös		0,26	0,47		0,32
võtan aktiivselt osa paremate töömeetodite ja protseduuride väljatöötamisest		0,31		0,68	
tunnen kohustust selgelt kõneleda oma töö ja karjääriga seotud plaanidest ja soovidest		0,26	0,26	0,65	
on oluline, et saan selgelt määratleda ja vahetu juhiga kokku leppida oma tööülesanded ja -kohustused X	0,33	0,27		0,63	
		0,38			0,48

Appendix A Rotated Component Matrix for employer obligations items ^(a,b)

First study

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
peab kujundama häid suhteid kõigi töötajate vahel	0,80				0,20	0,21		
peab hindama töötajat kui isiksust ja arvestama töötajate eripäradega	0,79				0,27		-0,21	
peab tundma huvi töötajate arvamuste ja tunnete vastu	0,76	0,22	0,23					
peab aitama töötajat tööalaste probleemide lahendamisel	0,75		0,23			0,24		
peab hindama mitte ainult tulemusi vaid ka töötaja isiklikku panust neisse X	0,60	0,40	0,20		0,25			
peab toetama ühistegevusi ja koostööd X	0,53	0,22	0,23	0,22		0,26	0,23	
peab tunnustama kõiki töötajaid hästi tehtud töö eest X	0,48	0,48		0,32	0,33		0,37	
peab investeerima oma töötajatesse (väljaõpe, koolitused, töökohtade arendamine jne)	0,21	0,82						
peab võimaldama töötajal omandada oskusi, mis suurendavad tema konkurentsivõimet		0,81		0,31				
peab aitama töötajal toime tulla uute tööalaste väljakutsetega	0,20	0,75	0,20		0,25			
peab looma võimalused erialaseks arenguks		0,62			0,33	0,28		
peab toetama töötajat mõelduka riski võtmisel ja uuenduste rakendamisel X	0,23	0,51	0,23		0,27	0,34		
peab tagama pideva ja püsiva töö			0,82			0,24	0,20	
peab pakkuma töötajale teist tööd kui töötaja töökoht kaob			0,73	0,26				
peab kinni sõlmitud lepetest ja vastuvõetud otsustest		0,26	0,67			0,26		
peab looma stabiilse ja turvalise töökeskkonna	0,21		0,66			0,27		

peab tagama töö tegemiseks vajalikud tingimused ja ressursid X ei vallanda töötajat, vaid pakub võimalused vigade heastamiseks X	0,31	0,27	0,56	0,22	0,35	0,47
peab toetama töötajaid uuendustega kohanemisel ja nendega toimetulekul	0,24		0,56	0,24		0,30
peab looma paindlikud töö tegemise võimalused muudatuste sisseviimisel arvestab töötajate võimalustega nendega toime tulla	0,20	0,20	0,24	0,80	0,28	0,26
peab toetama töötajaid uute oskuste omandamisel				0,77	0,29	0,31
peab pakkuma väljakutseid esitavaid tööülesandeid X	0,20	0,32	0,21	0,54	0,48	
töandja toetab ametialase karjääri tegemist X	0,20	0,39		0,49	0,29	0,21
peab looma vaimselt stimuleeriva õhkkonna X	0,19	0,31		0,48	0,34	0,27
peab julgustama töötajaid osalema uute töömeetodite ja protseduuride väljatöötamises		0,23		0,21	0,86	
peab julgustama kõiki töötajaid osalema otsustamisprotsessides	0,24			0,32	0,77	0,22
peab toetama töötaja initsiatiivi enesetäiendamise osas.		0,32		0,32	0,65	
peab pakkuma organisatsiooniseid arenguvõimalusi X	0,22	0,38		0,26	0,52	
on huvitatud püsiva töökaadri säilitamisest	0,25		0,22			0,75 0,21
peab hoida inimesi, kes on talle vajalikud	0,31					0,73
peab looma võimalused pikaajaliseks töösuhteks						0,76 0,27
peab looma võimalused karjääri arenguks	0,27				0,22	0,67
tegevus peab olema suunatud organisatsiooni hea maine hoidmiseks X	0,22		0,33	0,21		0,47
peab kohtlema kõiki töötajaid ühtemoodi						0,84
peab esitama kõigile sarnast tööd tegevatele inimestele ühetaolisi nõudmisi						0,73 0,33
kõigi tööd peab hindama ühtsete, selgete kriteeriumid ja standardid alusel						0,76 0,24

Appendix B Rotated Component Matrix for employee obligations items ^(a,b)

Second study

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
mind soovad organisatsiooniga vaid minu tööalased kohustused	0,75							
organisatsioon on minu jaoks vaid töö tegemise koht	0,75							-0,24
minu tegevus organisatsioonis on määratletud vaid minu tööülesannete kaudu	0,73							-0,24
teen organisatsioonis vaid seda, mille eest mulle makstakse	0,71							
tööd tehes järgin vaid töölepingu nõudeid	0,68				-0,21			-0,21
vastutan vaid töölepingus määratletud tööde ja ülesannete eest X	0,67				-0,23			-0,22
ma pidevalt täiendan end, et parandada oma võimalusi tööturul		0,73			0,27			
otsin võimalusi enda arendamiseks ja kvalifikatsiooni tõstmiseks		0,71						0,26
oma oskuste ja teadmiste omandamisel lähtun turu nõudmistest		0,69						0,24
tunnen vastutust enda õppe ja ümberõppe eest		0,67				0,25		0,24
hoian oma teadmised ja oskused tasemel, mis võimaldab mul alati tööd leida		0,62			0,26			
olen nõus osalema tegevustes ja võtma endale kohustusi, mis suurendavad minu võimalusi tööturul X		0,45						0,32
jagan alati informatsiooni oma töökaaslastega			0,72					
loon ja säilitan häid suhteid oma töökaaslastega			0,66		0,22			
aitan teisi nende tegevustes			0,62				0,21	
olen alati valmis tegema koostööd oma kolleegidega			0,62			0,23		
oma käitumise ja tegevuse kujundamisel järgin organisatsiooni tavasid			0,59				0,23	
hoian oma teadmised kõrgel tasemel, et olla teistele kasulik X		0,23	0,42	0,21		0,29	0,33	
otsin tegevusi ja võtan ülesandeid, mis võimaldavad mul olla				0,74	-0,25			

pikemalt seotud antud ettevõttega					
minu ametialane karjäär peaks kulgema ühes organisatsioonis	0,72				
pean õigeks pikemaajalisi suhteid ühe organisatsiooniga	0,71	-0,22			
pikemalt töötamine ühes ettevõttes on tööandja suhtes õiglane	0,68				0,24
minu tulevikuplaanid on seotud selle ettevõttega X	0,42			0,21	
kohanen kiiresti töösituatsioonis asetleidvate muudatustega	0,69			0,24	
olen nõus võtma uusi tööalaseid kohustusi	0,67			0,21	
võtan omaks uued tööharjumused, mis muutuvad koos muutustega töös	0,62	0,20			0,23
olen valmis muutma oma tööharjumusi, kui selleks tekib vajadus	0,59				
on loomulik, et minu tööülesanded muutuvad koos muutustega organisatsioonis	0,58	0,21			0,24
olen nõus täitma pidevalt uusi ülesandeid X	0,49	0,27			0,29
olen nõus vajaduse korral täitma ülesandeid , mis otseselt ei kuulu minu tööülesannete hulka	0,21			0,71	
tunnen kohustust muuta oma töö tulemuslikumaks ja tõhusamaks	0,68				0,37
olen valmis täitma erinevaid ülesandeid organisatsiooni edukuse nimel	0,20			0,67	0,30
olen nõus oma töö või töökoha muutumisega kui see on vajalik organisatsioonile		-0,20			
minu jaoks on oluline olla kasulik organisatsioonile		0,27		0,66	
olen nõus tegema ületunde kui selleks tekib vajadus X	0,22			0,63	0,23
tunnen kohustust hoida end kursis organisatsiooni arengu, edu ja probleemidega	0,31			0,46	0,34
tunnen kohustust tegeleda organisatsiooni probleemidega ka väljaspool tööaega				0,21	0,73
tunnen kohustust pingutada organisatsiooni edukuse nimel		0,25			0,72
tunnen kohustust pingutada organisatsiooni edukuse nimel					0,68
tunnen kohustust pingutada organisatsiooni edukuse nimel					0,56

<p>tunnen kohustust arendada enda juures organisatsiooni jaoks olulisi oskusi ja teadmisi X</p> <p>tunnen kohustust selgelt väljendada oma vajadusi ja seda, mis on mulle oluline minu töös</p> <p>võtan aktiivselt osa paremate töömeetodite ja protseduuride väljatöötamisest</p> <p>tunnen kohustust selgelt kõneleda oma töö ja karjääriga seotud plaanidest ja soovidest</p> <p>mul on õigus teha ettepanekuid selle kohta, kuidas oma tööd paremini teha</p> <p>osalen oma tööülesannete ja kohustuste määramisel X</p>	0,20			0,53	0,23
	-0,25	0,25			0,69
	-0,20		0,22		0,63
		0,33			0,61
	-0,22	0,23	0,34		0,59
	9,51	6,90	6,12	5,99	5,72

Explained variance (%) (Cumulative % 53,66)

(Cumulative % 57,93).

Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a Rotation converged in 69 iterations.

b Factor loadings <0.2 were omitted from the table

1 – Explicitly defined relations; 2 – Enhancing employability; 3 – Social relations; 4 – Career in organization; 5 – Dynamic performance; 6 – Personal contribution; 7 – Focus on organizational needs; 8 – Volition

Appendix B Rotated Component Matrix for employer obligations items ^(a,b)

Second study	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
peab pakkuma juhendamist ja tuge tööülesannetega toimetulekuks	0,77							0,22
peab looma võimalused erialaseks arenguks	0,77		0,21	0,26			0,21	
peab investeerima oma töötajatesse (väljaõpe, koolitused, töökohtade arendamine jne)	0,73							
peab võimaldama töötajal omandada oskusi, mis suurendavad tema konkurentsivõimet	0,73		0,22	0,23	0,23			0,22
peab aitama töötajal toime tulla uute tööalaste väljakutsetega	0,61							
peab täpselt ja selgelt (ühemõtteliselt) määratlema ja piiritlema töötaja kohustused	0,75							
peab arvestama töötajaga vaid tema töökohustuste ja vastutuse piires	0,74							
peab fikseerima kõik töötaja kohustused kirjalikult töölepingus	0,73							
peab eeldama töötajalt vaid väga konkreetsete, talle määratud ülesannete täitmist	0,73							
peab piiritlema töötaja vastutused ja õigused kindlate tööülesannetega	0,73							
peab andma töötajale õiguse otsustada ise vahetut tööd puudutavate küsimuste üle			0,75					
peab usaldama töötaja otsustamise võimet	0,21		0,68	0,23				
peab julgustama kõiki töötajaid osalema otsustamisprotsessides			0,65				0,22	
peab julgustama töötajaid osalema uute töömeetodite ja protseduuride väljatöötamises			0,63		0,21			
peab toetama töötaja initsiatiivi enesetäiendamise osas			0,59	0,26				
peab looma paindlikud töö tegemise võimalused			0,25	0,68				
muudatuste sisseviimisel arvestab töötajate võimalustega nendega toime tulla	0,22			0,66				

peab toetama töötajaid uuendustega kohanemisel ja nendega toimetulekul	0,25	0,20	0,64	
peab looma võimalused uute tööskuste omandamiseks	0,24		0,58	
peab toetama uute eesmärkide püstitamisel X	0,47		0,50	0,21
peab aitama töötajat tööalaste probleemide lahendamisel			0,70	0,22
peab kujundama häid suhteid kõigi töötajate vahel			0,68	0,21
tööandja kaitseb oma töötajate huve			0,61	0,27
peab tundma huvi töötajate arvamuste ja tunnete vastu			0,61	
peab hindama töötajat kui isiksust ja arvestama töötajate eripäradega X	0,21	0,23	0,47	0,24
peab tagama pideva ja püsiva töö			0,78	
peab looma stabiilse ja turvalise töökeskkonna			0,20	0,69
peab kinni sõlmitud lepetest ja vastuvõetud otsustest			0,68	0,28
peab pakkuma töötajale teist tööd kui töötaja töökoht kaob	0,22		0,63	
peab tagama töö tegemiseks vajalikud tingimused ja ressursid X	0,24		0,33	0,25
peab esitama kõigile samast tööd tegevatele inimestele ühetaolisi nõudmisi			0,79	
kõigi tööd peab hindama ühtisete, selgete kriteeriumid ja standardid alusel			0,76	0,22
peab kohtlema kõiki töötajaid ühtemoodi			0,24	0,20
kõigile töötajatele on loodud võrdsed võimalused ja õigused			0,66	
pakub organisatsioonisiseseid arenguvõimalusi			0,23	0,68
peab hoidma inimesi, kes on talle vajalikud			0,24	0,59
peab looma võimalused pikaajaliseks töösuhteks			0,21	0,56
on huvitatud püsiva töökaadri säilitamisest			0,24	0,55
peab looma võimalused karjääri arenguks X	0,31	0,41	0,26	0,51
Explained variance (%) (cumulative 57,97%)	8,41	7,96	84	6,74
		7,95	6,94	6,28
				5,86

Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring.
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

^a Rotation converged in 18 iterations.

^b Factor loadings <0.2 were omitted from the table

1 - Employee centrality (focus); 2 - Specified working terms (tangibility); 3 - Empowerment (contract level); 4 - Flexibility (stability-flexibility); 5 -Organizational support (scope); 6 - Stable working conditions (stability-flexibility); 7 - Equal treatment (contract level); 8 - Long term relations (time-frame)

Appendix C

Correlations between perceived employee and employer obligations

Correlations ^a	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
1 Career in organization (time-frame)	1.00															
2 Explicitly defined relations (tangibility)	-0.08	1.00														
3 Dynamic performance (stability)	0.36	-0.24	1.00													
4 Personal contribution (scope)	0.29	-0.29	0.47	1.00												
5 Social relations (scope)	0.20	-0.13	0.34	0.39	1.00											
6 Enhancing employability	0.44	-0.09	0.36	0.36	0.22	1.00										
7 Focus on org. needs (focus)	0.37	-0.37	0.40	0.43	0.25	0.36	1.00									
8 Volition (contract level)	0.28	-0.08	0.33	0.30	0.29	0.36	0.33	1.00								
9 Long term relations (time frame)	0.33	-0.12	0.28	0.33	0.28	0.32	0.34	0.33	1.00							
10 Specified working terms (tangibility)	0.15	0.19	0.15	0.18	0.20	0.17	0.10	0.21	0.31	1.00						
11 Stable working conditions (stability)	0.22	-0.02	0.23	0.28	0.25	0.23	0.24	0.26	0.50	0.44	1.00					
12 Flexibility (stability)	0.31	-0.13	0.30	0.35	0.29	0.33	0.35	0.33	0.42	0.32	0.51	1.00				
13 Organizational support (scope)	0.29	-0.08	0.23	0.30	0.29	0.28	0.30	0.33	0.40	0.26	0.43	0.47	1.00			
14 Employee centrality (focus)	0.36	-0.12	0.31	0.38	0.31	0.40	0.37	0.35	0.40	0.30	0.44	0.52	0.41	1.00		
15 Empowerment (focus)	0.35	-0.18	0.33	0.38	0.30	0.38	0.38	0.41	0.42	0.24	0.44	0.55	0.48	0.50	1.00	
16 Equal treatment (contract level)	0.18	0.05	0.16	0.19	0.20	0.20	0.17	0.22	0.33	0.43	0.46	0.41	0.43	0.35	0.37	1.00

^a all correlations are at $p < 0.001$

Appendix D Mean scores and standard deviations for employee and employer obligations for gender and age groups

	Men		Women		<20 years		20 - 29 y.		30 - 39 y.		40 - 49 y.		50 -51 y.		60 < years	
	Mea n	Std. D	Mea n	Std. D	Mea n	Std. D	Mea n	Std. D	Mea n	Std. D	Mea n	Std. D	Mea n	Std. D	Mea n	Std. D
Employee obligations																
Career in organization (time-frame)	3,28	0,72	3,15	0,76	3,46	0,91	3,43	0,70	3,22	0,75	3,09	0,74	3,08	0,68	2,95	0,72
Explicitly defined relat.s (tangibility)	2,77	0,89	2,75	0,82	2,94	0,85	2,72	0,81	2,64	0,83	2,77	0,85	2,90	0,89	3,04	0,87
Dynamic performance (stability)	3,52	0,62	3,52	0,59	3,75	0,70	3,60	0,57	3,53	0,62	3,48	0,58	3,42	0,62	3,25	0,71
Personal contribution (scope)	3,53	0,60	3,53	0,59	3,43	0,67	3,51	0,60	3,56	0,61	3,54	0,58	3,52	0,59	3,58	0,57
Social relations (scope)	3,82	0,56	3,91	0,52	4,02	0,59	3,81	0,57	3,85	0,56	3,86	0,53	3,92	0,49	3,89	0,59
Enhancing employability	3,27	0,68	3,25	0,68	3,46	0,71	3,36	0,64	3,30	0,69	3,19	0,68	3,19	0,69	3,29	0,78
Focus on org. needs (focus)	3,17	0,79	3,05	0,72	2,91	0,75	3,08	0,73	3,14	0,80	3,11	0,74	3,14	0,76	3,08	0,74
Volition (contract level)	3,76	0,57	3,75	0,54	3,73	0,61	3,76	0,54	3,78	0,57	3,72	0,55	3,77	0,56	3,78	0,56
Employer obligations																
Long term relations (time frame)	3,43	0,76	3,37	0,83	3,38	0,85	3,49	0,75	3,43	0,79	3,32	0,81	3,39	0,82	3,40	0,66
Spec.d working terms (tangibility)	3,43	0,77	3,50	0,82	3,45	0,78	3,41	0,78	3,44	0,78	3,47	0,81	3,56	0,79	3,57	0,69
Stable working cond.s (stability)	3,62	0,78	3,59	0,80	3,57	0,80	3,64	0,72	3,58	0,80	3,55	0,86	3,67	0,77	3,62	0,67
Flexibility (stability)	3,30	0,77	3,26	0,80	3,19	0,87	3,37	0,71	3,29	0,81	3,21	0,81	3,28	0,78	3,30	0,69
Organizational support (scope)	3,30	0,80	3,28	0,88	3,32	0,87	3,36	0,77	3,32	0,84	3,23	0,85	3,26	0,89	3,37	0,80
Employee centrality (focus)	3,37	0,77	3,29	0,82	3,18	0,92	3,42	0,77	3,37	0,78	3,25	0,82	3,30	0,80	3,28	0,74
Empowerment (focus)	3,33	0,75	3,26	0,81	3,20	0,79	3,40	0,72	3,32	0,78	3,24	0,80	3,25	0,83	3,31	0,62
Equal treatment (contract level)	3,17	0,82	3,20	0,90	3,23	0,85	3,16	0,85	3,20	0,86	3,17	0,88	3,20	0,86	3,14	0,83

Appendix D Mean scores and standard deviations for employee and employer obligations for education groups

	basic education		secondary education		vocational education		higher education		degree	
	Mean	Std. D.	Mean	Std. D.	Mean	Std. D.	Mean	Std. D.	Mean	Std. D.
Employee obligations										
Career in organization (time-frame)	3,17	0,74	3,20	0,73	3,29	0,65	3,25	0,75	3,28	0,80
Explicitly defined relations (tangibility)	2,88	0,85	2,86	0,84	2,58	0,79	2,49	0,82	2,22	0,76
Dynamic performance (stability)	3,46	0,62	3,52	0,58	3,52	0,56	3,58	0,59	3,70	0,70
Personal contribution (scope)	3,44	0,61	3,56	0,57	3,45	0,62	3,63	0,58	3,70	0,53
Social relations (scope)	3,80	0,55	3,94	0,53	3,75	0,61	3,88	0,51	3,79	0,56
Enhancing employability	3,16	0,71	3,28	0,65	3,29	0,58	3,38	0,67	3,50	0,69
Focus on org. needs (focus)	2,96	0,76	3,14	0,74	3,16	0,67	3,27	0,74	3,40	0,71
Volition (contract level)	3,68	0,58	3,80	0,52	3,74	0,58	3,81	0,54	3,84	0,60
Employer obligations										
Long term relations (time frame)	3,31	0,80	3,43	0,80	3,49	0,68	3,48	0,80	3,57	0,66
Specified working terms (tangibility)	3,42	0,80	3,52	0,78	3,53	0,80	3,45	0,81	3,26	0,84
Stable working conditions (stability)	3,53	0,80	3,63	0,82	3,65	0,78	3,66	0,75	3,60	0,67
Flexibility (stability)	3,18	0,79	3,31	0,80	3,34	0,72	3,36	0,76	3,44	0,62
Organizational support (scope)	3,22	0,83	3,33	0,86	3,29	0,81	3,34	0,84	3,31	0,69
Employee centrality (focus)	3,20	0,80	3,36	0,80	3,46	0,79	3,44	0,77	3,57	0,63
Empowerment (focus)	3,21	0,80	3,29	0,78	3,42	0,70	3,41	0,76	3,45	0,67
Equal treatment (contract level)	3,16	0,82	3,21	0,90	3,25	0,80	3,19	0,89	3,06	0,82

SUMMARY IN ESTONIAN

ERINEVUSED EESTI TÖÖTAJATE PSÜHHOLOOGILISTES LEPETES: TAJUTUD KOHUSTUSTE TUGEVUST MÕJUTAVAD TEGURID

Dissertatsioon põhineb kahel erineval ajaperioodil – 2005-2006 ja 2009. aastal läbi viidud uuringul ja 2013 aastal avaldatud artiklil.

Teema tähtsus ja uudsus

Viimase 20 aasta jooksul Eestis ja 30-40 aasta jooksul Euroopas on toimunud nii majanduses kui sotsiaalses keskkonnas muudatused, mis on oluliselt muutnud organisatsioonide toimimist, tööturu käitumist ja töö olemust. Kõik need muudatused on oluliselt mõjutanud nii tööalaseid suhteid kui töökäitumist.

Igasuguste töösuhete keskseks probleemiks on töötaja ja tööandja vastastikused kohustused antud lepingu raames. Osa neist kokkulepetest ja kohustustest on kirjalikult fikseeritud töölepingus, kuid suurem osa neist on vaikelepped, mida ei sõnastata ning mille üle arutletakse vaid haruharva. Muutunud töökeskkond ei võimalda jätkata vanade väljakujunenud töösuhetega. Oluline on mõista nii uut kujunevat/kujunenud töösuhete korraldust kui ka muutustega kaasuvaid mõjusid ja tagajärgi. Kujunenud töösuhteid, inimese rolli ja positsiooni organisatsioonis ei saa käsitleda enam vanade töösuhete raamis.

Muutused töötaja ja tööandja vastastikuste suhete ja kokkulepete tasakaalus on olnud oluliseks tõukejõuks psühholoogiliste lepete uurimiseks (Anderson, Schalk, 1998), sest organisatsiooni muudatuste tingimustes muutub psühholoogiliste lepete olemasolu eriti nähtavaks, kuna muutused organisatsioonis tavaliselt kutsuvad esile ka muutusi olemasolevates psühholoogilistes lepetes. Selleks et paremini juhtida ja kujundada tööalaseid suhteid, on oluline aru saada, kuidas kujunevad ja toimuvad muutused psühholoogilistes lepetes. 1989 aastal taastuvustas M.D.Rousseau psühholoogiliste lepete mõistet ning sellest ajast on psühholoogilised lepped kujunenud nii töö- ja organisatsioonipsühholoogia kui ka personalijuhtimise valdkonnas keskseks konstruktsiooniks töösuhete ja töötajate rolli uurimisel.

Chris Argyris oli esimene, kes kasutas mõistet “*psühholoogilised lepped*” 1960. aastal ilmunud raamatus *Understanding Organizational Behavior*. Täpne termin, mida autor kasutas, oli *psychological work contract*, tähistamaks tööstuse liinitöölise ja nende meistrite või töödejuhatajate vahelisi suhteid. Termin tähistas vaikivat nõusolekut kahe osapoolte vahel – kui töödejuhataja pidas kinni tööliste mitteformaalse kultuuri normidest, siis tööliste tegutsesid probleemideta nõutaval tasemel. Psühholoogiliste lepete mõistet laiendasid kaks järgmist tööd. 1962 aastal ilmus raamat *Men, Management, and Mental Health*, autoriteks Levinson, Price, Munden, Mandl ja Solley. Nende autorite käsitluses tähendas psühholoogiline lepe

seeriat vastastikuseid ootusi, millest suhte osapooled ei pruugi teadlikud olla, kuid mis juhivad nende ootusi ja suhtumist teineteisesse. Nende käsitluses olid vastastikused ootused peamiselt vaikeootused, mis olid kujundatud inimese varasemate kogemuste poolt enne organisatsiooniga liitumist ning olid ajas muutuvad. E. Schein (1965, 1980) arendas terminit edasi, tähistades sellega inimese ja organisatsiooni vastastikuseid ootusi, mida nad omavad üksteise suhtes. Scheini järgi ei kätke need ootused endas mitte ainult teavet selle kohta, kui palju tööd tuleb teha millise tasu eest, vaid sisaldavad ka töölise ja organisatsiooni vahelisi õigusi, privileege ja kohustusi. Ootuste mittetäitumine võib aga ohustada organisatsiooni funktsioneerimist ning viia situatsioonini, kus töötajad keelduvad koostööst juhtidega.

Tänapäevane psühholoogiliste lepete käsitlus lähtub enamasti M.D.Rousseau töödest. D.M.Rousseau (1989) definitsiooni järgi on psühholoogilised lepped:

„...indiviidi veendumused vastastikuse vahetuse tingimuste ja asjaolude kohta isiku ja teise osapole vahel. Võtmeküsimuseks on siin veendumus, et on antud lubadus ning vastutasuks on pakutud teatud hüved, see seob osapooled teatud vastastikuste kohustustega teineteise suhtes“ (lk. 123).

Rousseau (1995) defineerib neid kohustusi kui enese sidumist tuleviku tegevustega ning töötaja tajub neid kokkuleppeid vastastikku mõistetavatena, olenemata sellest, kas see nii on. Psühholoogilisi leppeid saab vaadelda kui mehhanisme, mis mõlema osapole jaoks määratlevad teemad ja valdkonnad, mida pole käsitletud õiguslikes lepingutes, ning võimaldavad interpreteerida formaalsete lepingute vahelejätte ja lahknevusi.

Psühholoogilised lepped väljendavad töötaja arusaamist sellest, millised on eeldatavatest või konkreetsetest lubadustest tulenevad osapoolte kohustused töötaja-organisatsioon vahetussuhtes. Lepetes sisalduvad kohustused tuginevad inimese veendumusel nende olemasolu kohta ning nende kujunemiseks on kaks allikat. Esimesena saab käsitleda inimese varasemaid hoiakuid, väärtusi ja kogemusi. Teiseks allikaks on vahetud töö- ja suhete kogemused organisatsioonis. Psühholoogilised lepped kujunevad välja teatud ajahetkedel (tööle asumisel või uute töökohustustega kohanemisel) ning püsivad suhteliselt muutumatutena. Need on alati individuaalsed lepped ja nende peamiseks funktsiooniks on ebakindluse vähendamine. Formaalsed töölepingud ei suuda määratleda ja fikseerida kõiki võimalikke töösuhete nüansse, nende puudujääkide tasandamiseks ongi psühholoogilised lepped. Teiseks funktsiooniks on töötaja käitumise kujundamine. Psühholoogilised lepped toimivad teatud tüüpi standarditena. Töötaja võrdleb ja hindab oma kohustusi organisatsiooni ees organisatsiooni kohustuste taustal ning saadud kriitilise tulemuse baasil kujundab oma käitumise. Psühholoogilised lepped loovad inimesele tunde ja teadmise, et ta suudab mõjutada organisatsioonis endaga toimuvat (McFarlane *et al.* 1994).

Psühholoogiliste lepete kõige olulisemaks tunnusjooneks võib pidada indiviidi veendumust, et lepped on vastastikused, et osapoolte ühine arusaam on siduv teatud tegevuste jaoks. Töötaja ja tööandja üksmeel vastastikuste kohustuste osas on

töösuhete edukuse oluliseks tingimuseks (Shore and Shore 1995) ning lepetest peetakse enam kinni. Psühholoogiliste lepete tugevus määrab inimese motivatsiooni, pühendumise organisatsioonile, tööga rahulolu ja kuivõrd püsivaks inimene hindab oma töösuhet (Rousseau, 1994, 1995; Makin *et al.* 1996; Guest, 2007). Psühholoogilised lepped motiveerivad töötajaid pidama kinni oma lubadustest ning võtma vastutust, kui nad tunnetavad, et organisatsioon täidab nende ees oma kohustused. Kõige suuremad muutused psühholoogilistes lepetes võivad aset leida, kui töötaja tajub, et leppeid on rikutud ehk antud lubadusi murtud. Erinevad uurimused on näidanud, et psühholoogiliste lepete tajutud rikkumise korral inimesed vähendavad oma jõupingutusi ja side organisatsiooniga nõrgeneb (Bunderson 2001; Lester and Kickul 2001) ning suureneb töölt lahkumise tõenäosus (Rousseau and Parks 1993). Üldjuhul on töötajate hoiakud positiivsemad ja töötulemused paremad, kui mõlema osapoole arvamused ühtivad selles, mida tööandja lubab töötajale (Rousseau 2004; Dabos and Rousseau 2004).

Ka tööandjatel on „sõlmitud“ psühholoogilised lepped oma töötajatega, mis sõltuvad nende individuaalsest kompetentsusest, usaldusväärsusest ja nende olulisusest firma jaoks. Selleks, et kujuneksid realistlikud psühholoogilised lepped, peaksid need olema kooskõlas üldise personalijuhtimise strateegiaga (Rousseau, 2004). Organisatsioonid on edukamad, kui suudavad töötajatele selgitada uute töösuhete olemust, selleks on vajalik kahepoolne selge kommunikatsioon. Tööandjad peaksid olema suutelised jagama tööliste võimalikult palju organisatsiooni tegevust puudutavat informatsiooni, et töötajad saaksid langetada mõistlikke otsuseid oma töösuhete kohta.

Kuigi puudub üksmeelne kokkulepe selles osa, mis on praeguste psühholoogiliste lepete sisuks, on uurijad üksmeelselt nõus seisukohaga, et nende sisu on oluliselt muutunud viimaste aastakümnete jooksul (nt. McLean Parks and Kidder 1994; Robinson *et al.* 1994; Sims 1994; Herriot and Pemberton 1995; Hiltrop 1995; Kessler and Undy 1996; Rousseau. 1996; Sparrow 1996; Morrison and Robinson 1997). See, mida organisatsioonid oma töötajatelt täna ootavad, on oluliselt erinev sellest, millised olid nõudmised varem. Koos sellega on muutunud ka töötajate ootused ja vajadused. Nõudmiste ja vajaduste tasakaalu ja vastavusse viimine loob turvalise töösuhete ja tagab mõlema osapoole edukuse. Selleks, et sellist ootuste, nõudmiste ja vajaduste kattuvust saavutada, on oluline mõista neid aluseid, millest lähtub töötajate seotus organisatsiooniga.

Muutusi psühholoogilistes lepetes pole Eestis seni ulatuslikult uuritud ja sellekohane informatsioon puudub. Käesoleva dissertatsiooni ülesandeks on saada informatsiooni töötajate psühholoogiliste lepete kohta, mis on aluseks nende tööalasele käitumisele ja valikutele ning hinnangutele. Uued töösuhete muudavad ka olemasolevate mõjurite tähendusi. Käesoleva dissertatsiooni raames hinnatakse erinevate mõjurite tugevust ja osatähtsust psühholoogilistest lepetest tulenevate kohustuste tajumisel (vt joonis 1).

Töö eesmärk ja uurimisväited

Dissertatsiooni ainevaldkonnaks on tööalased suhted ja neid käsitletakse psühholoogiliste lepete konstruktsiooni raames. Eestis ei ole süsteemselt ja ulatuslikult töötajate psühholoogilisi leppeid seni uuritud. Antud dissertatsiooni **eesmärgiks on leida Eesti töötajate psühholoogiliste lepete tajutud kohustuste struktuur ja leida tegurid, mis mõjutavad tajutud kohustuste tugevust ning põhjustavad erinevusi kohustuste struktuuris erinevate töötajagruppide vahel.**

Töös on püstitatud **neli uurimisväidet**, mille kehtivust kontrollitakse kahe eraldiseisva uuringuga.

Esimese uurimisväite kohaselt on psühholoogiliste lepete tajutud kohustuste tugevus ja suund oluliselt mõjutatud soo, vanuse ja hariduse poolt. Soo mõjud tulenevad kogu elu vältavatest sotsialiseerumise protsessidest, mille käigus inimesed omandavad sotsiaalsed normid, rollid, reeglid, väärtused ja standardid. Kuna psühholoogiliste lepete kujunemine on oluliselt mõjutatud ajast ja keskkonnast, siis erinevas vanuses inimestel võivad olla erinevad veendumused töösuhete osas. Haridus on seotud teadmiste ja informatsiooni analüüsiga, mis oluliselt mõjutab inimese üldisi arusaamu ja hoiakuid, mis omakorda mõjutavad inimese käitumist.

Teine uurimisväide eeldab, et töökeskkonnas on tegurid, mis oluliselt mõjutavad psühholoogiliste lepete kujunemist. Psühholoogiliste lepete funktsiooniks on töötaja ebakindluse vähendamine ja käitumise kujundamine, mis loovad kontrollitunde töökeskkonnas, sellest tulenevalt saab eeldada, et tegelikul töösituatsioonil on oluline mõju adekvaatsete ja tasakaalus psühholoogiliste lepete kujunemisele. Töökeskkonna teguritena hinnatakse vastaja positsiooni, tööstaazi pikkuse (antud organisatsioonis), sektori ja organisatsiooni suuruse mõju.

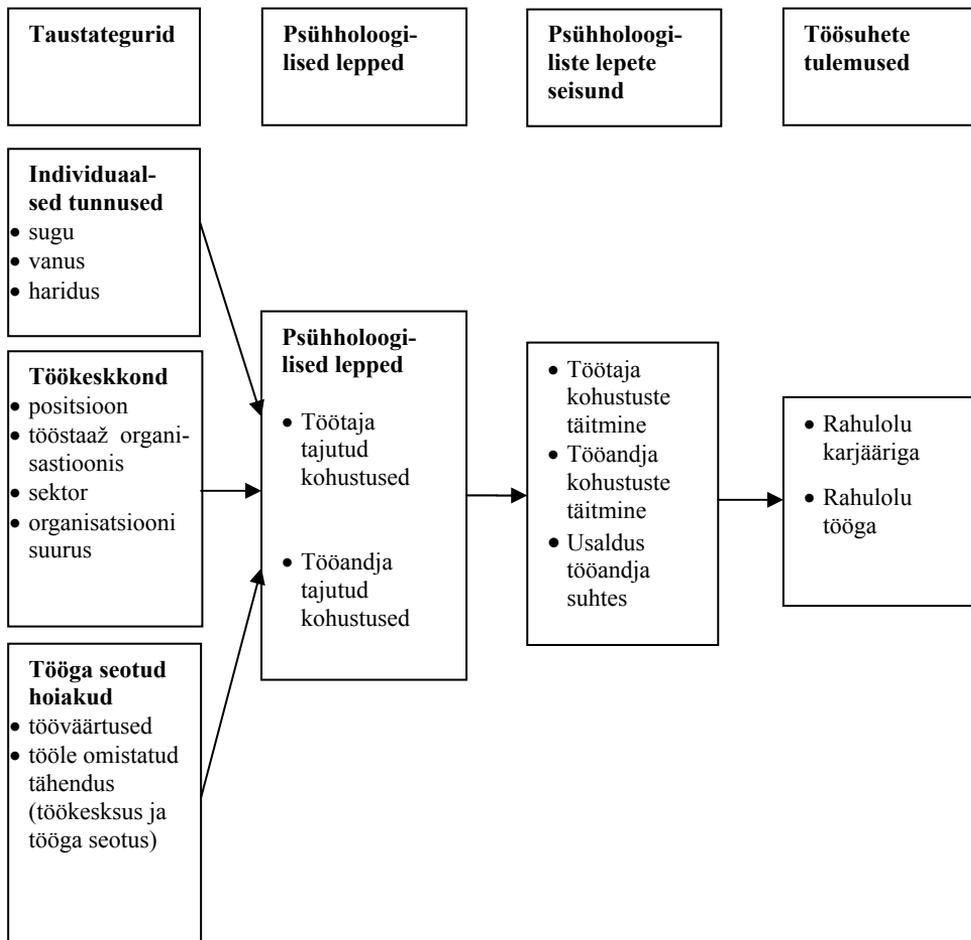
Kolmanda uurimisväite kohaselt on töötajate psühholoogiliste lepete kujunemine oluliselt mõjutatud töötaja tööväärtuste ja tööle omistatava tähenduse poolt. Tööväärtused on valdkonnaspetsiifilised ja sellest tulenevalt ka kergemini määratletavad. Tööväärtusi defineeritakse kui ajalises ja situatsiooni kontekstis püsiva iseloomuga stabiilseid taotletavaid seisundeid, eesmärgi või käitumisviise, mis kujundavad nii tööga seotud hoiakuid kui reguleerivad adekvaatse käitumise valikut kindlasuunaliste standardite ja kriteeriumite püstitamise kaudu.

Neljas uurimisväide on seotud juhtide psühholoogiliste lepetega. Organisatsioonis toimivad juhid kahel positsioonil – juhid kui töötajad ja juhid kui organisatsiooni esindajad. Organisatsiooni esindajatena edastavad nad organisatsioonipoolseid ootusi ja nõudmisi ning nende käitumine ja kommunikatsioon töötajatega on viimastele aluseks tööandja poolsete kohutuste täitmise hindamiseks. Juhtide käitumine ja edastatavad ootused on kriitilise tähtsusega tasakaalus töösuhete kujunemisel. Mida suuremad on töötajate psühholoogiliste lepete ja tööandja ootuste ja kohustuste täitmise erinevused, seda pingestatumad on suhted. Kuna psühholoogilised lepped on oluliselt mõjutatud inimese enda omaduste, hoiakute ja väärtuste poolt ning viimased omavad määravat rolli elukutse ja karjääri valikul ja samas teise olulise tegurina mõjutab positsioon ja töökeskkond psühholoogiliste

lepete kujunemist, siis on alust väita, et juhtide kui organisatsiooni/tööandja esindajate arusaam ja ootused töötajate psühholoogilistest lepetest on oluliselt mõjutatud nende endi (kui töötajate) psühholoogilistest lepetest.

Uurimuste struktuur ja kasutatud meetodid

Tööeesmärgi saavutamiseks ja uurimisväidete kontrollimiseks viidi läbi kaks eraldiseisvat uurimust: esimene uurimus viidi läbi 2005. aastal ja teine 2009. aastal. Esimene uurimus keskendus töötaja psühholoogiliste lepete kaardistamisele ja erinevate mõjurite mõjumäära hindamisele (vt. joonis 1). Teises uurimuses (vt. joonis 2) keskenduti eelkõige juhtide psühholoogilistele lepetele ja neid hinnati kahest erinevast perspektiivist lähtudes: juhid kui töötajad ja juhid kui organisatsiooni esindajad.



Joonis 1. Esimese uurimuse analüütiline raamistik
Autori joonis

Tööle seati **kaheksa uurimisülesannet**.

Esimeseks ülesandeks oli konstrueerida psühholoogiliste lepete tunnusjoontele tuginev tajutud kohustuste olulisust mõõtev küsimustik.

Teiseks ülesandeks oli kontrollida isikutunnuste (sugu, vanus, haridus) mõju tajutud kohustuste olulisuse määrale.

Kolmandaks ülesandeks oli töökeskkonna faktorite mõjumäära kontrollimine.

Neljandaks ülesandeks oli hinnata individuaalsete tööväärtuste ja tööle omistatud tähenduse mõju tajutud kohustuste olulisuse kujunemisele.

Viiendaks ülesandeks oli välja selgitada töö- ja karjäärirahulolu sõltuvus tajutud kohustuste olulisuse määra ja psühholoogiliste lepete seisundist.

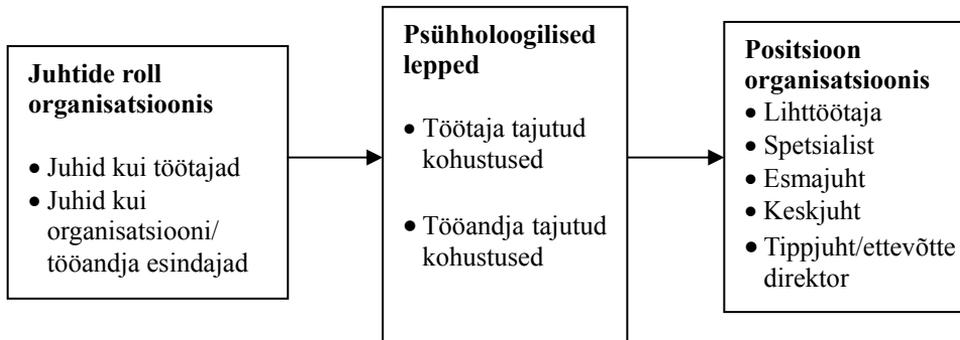
Esimesed viis ülesannet täideti esimese uurimuse käigus.

Kuuendaks ülesandeks oli hinnata juhtide kui organisatsiooni/tööandja esindajate ootusi ja nõudmisi nii töötajate kui tööandjate kohustuste osas.

Seitsmes ülesanne oli võrrelda juhtide endi psühholoogilisi leppeid ja nende kui tööandja esindajate poolt tajutud töötaja ja tööandja kohustusi.

Kaheksas ülesanne oli võrrelda juhtide kui töötajate ja kui tööandjate esindaja tulemusi teiste töötajagruppide psühholoogiliste lepingutega.

Kuues, seitsmes ja kaheksas ülesanne täideti teise uurimuse käigus.



Joonis 2. Teise uurimuse analüütiline raamistik

Autori joonis

Kuigi psühholoogilised lepped on isikuomased, mis kujunevad ja arenevad suhetes organisatsiooniga, toetudes inimese isiklikule kogemusele ja vastastikusele mõjutamisele, on neis sotsiaalsetest normidest ja väärtustest ning üldisest sotsiaal-majanduslikust seisundist tulenevalt ühiseid jooni, mis loob võimalused nende lepete sisu ja seisundi uurimiseks ja mõõtmiseks. Antud dissertatsioonis hinnatakse psühholoogilisi leppeid tunnustepõhiselt. Selline lähenemine võimaldab koondada teatud spetsiifilisi vajadusi ja ootusi üldisemate tunnuste alla, mis omakorda

muudab võimalikuks erinevate ja suuremate töötajagruppide psühholoogiliste lepete mõõtmise ja võrdlemise. Uuringu jaoks kirjeldatud dimensioonid peegeldavad üldisemaid huve, vajadusi ja seisukohti ja esindavad nii klassikaliseks peetud töösuhte omadusi kui ka töökeskkonna muutustega kaasnevaid nõudmisi ja ootusi.

Tunnuste kirjeldamisel lähtuti erinevate autorite varasematest töödest. Peamiste uurimustena võiks välja tuua: Rousseau and McLean Park's (1993) (based on the works of Macneil (1985)), Van Dyne's *et al.* (1995), Hiltrop's (1996), Herriot, Manning, and Kidd's (1997), McLean Park's *et al.*, (1998), Rousseau and Schalk's (2000), O'Leary-Kelly and Schenk's (2000), Guest and Conway (2002) ja Sels' *et al.* (2004) uurimused ja teoreetilised konstruktsioonid.

Psühholoogilised lepped kirjeldati kuue üldisema tunnuse kaudu:

Ajaperspektiiv (*time-frame*) – pikaajaline või lühiajaline organisatsiooniga seotus.

Töösuhte määratletus (*tangibility*) – töösuhted on kas selged, piiritletud, tööülesanded on üheselt määratletud ja kergelt kontrollitavad või töösuhted tuginevad usaldusele ja ülesanded tulenevad tihti vajadustest.

Töösuhte stabiilsus või paindlikkus (*stability-flexibility*) – töösuhted on kas kindlalt kokkulepitud, jäigad, tegevus stabiilne või töösuhted on paindlikud muutuvad ja töötajal on valmidus kohaneda muutuvate tingimuste ja nõudmistega.

Suhete ulatus (*scope of relations*) – kitsaste suhete korral on töö vaid majanduslik tegevus, suhe on instrumentaalne. Avara suhete korral on töö seotud inimese enesehinnangu ja identiteediga.

Töösuhte orienteeritus (*focus*) – töösuhte keskmeks on kas töötaja või organisatsiooni vajadused ja nendega siis vastavalt kas arvestatakse või ei.

Töösuhte tase (*contract level*) määrab selle, kui palju on töötajatel võimalus osaleda oma töötingimuste määramisel ja kas on võimalik sõlmida isiklike kokkuleppeid või koheldakse kõiki töötajaid ühel alusel ja kehtivad kollektiivsed kokkulepped.

Psühholoogiliste lepete hindamiseks kasutati autori poolt koostatud struktureeritud küsimustikku.

Psühholoogiliste lepete mõõtmiseks on tunnusjooned kirjeldatud tunnusele tüüpiliste käitumisjoonte kaudu, mis tagavad eeldatava tulemuse. Psühholoogiliste lepete üldised tunnused sõnastati eraldi töötaja ja tööandja kohustuste vormis. Vastajal paluti töötaja kohustuste osas esitatud käitumuslike väiteid hinnata selle alusel, kuivõrd ta tunneb, et on kohustatud toimima kirjeldatud viisil. Tööandja kohustuste osas tuli hinnata, kuivõrd vastaja tunneb, et tema tööandja on kohustatud käituma esitatud viisil. Väidete kehtivust hinnati Likert-tüüpi 5-punktsel skaalal, kus 1 tähistas “ei tunne kohustatud olevat selliselt käituma” ja 5 tähistas “tugevat kohustust selliselt käituda”.

Töö empiiriline osa

Esimene uurimus viidi läbi 2005–2006. 2500 jaotatud küsimustikust laekus täidetult 2246 küsimustikku, millest osutusid statistiliselt analüüsivõetavateks 2173, mis kujunes ka lõppvalimi suuruseks. Valimisse kuulujatest 49,8% olid mehed. Keskmiseks vanuseks kujunes 35,2 aastat ja keskmine tööstaaž antud töökohal oli 5,87 aastat. 36,1% töötas avalikus sektoris, 57,1% erasektoris ja 6,8% olid hõivatud mittetulundusühingutes.

Esimene uurimus keskendus töötaja psühholoogilistele lepetele. Esimesed kaks uurimisväidet leidsid andmete analüüsi käigus kinnitust. Olulisemaks individuaalseks teguriks, mis määras töötaja tajutud kohustuste tugevuse, osutus haridus, mis kutsus esile erinevusi kõikide töötaja kohustuste osas ja enamikus tööandja kohustuste osas. Kõrgema hariduse tasemega vastajad tundsid kohustust olla iseseisvamad, paindlikumad ja võtsid enam vastutust oma teadmiste/oskuste taseme ja töötulemuste osas. Tööandjalt ootasid nad samuti suuremat endaga arvestamist, paremate töötingimuste loomist ja suuremat tegutsemisvabadust. Soost tulenevad erinevused olid küll statistiliselt olulised, kuid nõrgemad, kui varasemad organisatsiooni-psühholoogia alased uurimused oleks eeldanud. Naised tähtsustasid töötaja kohustuste osas enam sotsiaalseid kohustusi ja mehed pigem organisatsiooniga seotust. Tööandja kohustuste osas tundsid mehed, et nende tööandjad on enam kohustatud nendega arvestama kui naised. Vanusegruppide lõikes ilmnes üllatuslikult noorematel töötajatel tugevam tendents omada pikemaajalisi suhteid ja teha karjääri organisatsioonis. Lisaks sellele hindasid nooremad arengu, paindlikkuse ja konkurentsivõime hoidmisega seotud kohustusi olulisemaks kui nende vanemad kolleegid. Üldise tendentsina võib välja tuua, et individuaalsed tunnused mõjutasid enam olulisuse hinnanguid töötaja kohustuste osas ja erinevused olid väiksemad tööandja kohustuste osas.

Töökeskkonna tegurite mõju kohustuste tajumisel oli oodatust väiksem. Töötamise sektor ja organisatsiooni suurus ja tööstaaž ametikohal omasid ebaolulist mõju. Statistiliselt olulised erinevused tunnuste gruppide vahel ilmnesid vaid üksikute kohustuste osas. Olulised erinevused ilmnesid aga tööpositsiooni lõikes. Kõige suuremad erinevused olid lihttöötajate ja teiste positsioonirühmade vahel. Esiteks oli nende tajutud kohustuste tugevuse määr nii töötaja kui tööandja kohustuste osas nõrgem kui teistel positsioonigruppidel, mis viitab ka nõrgemale seotusele organisatsiooniga. Ja teiseks eristusid lihttöötajad teistest gruppidest selle poolest, et eelistasid toimida selgepiirilistes, määratletud töösuhetes. Enda arendamise ja organisatsiooni vajaduste tagamise osas jäid nende kohustused nõrgaks. Tööandjatelt ootavad nad eelkõige stabiilset, turvalist töökeskkonda ja võrdset kohtlemist. Kõige tugevamaks hindasid vastastikke kohustusi kesk- ja tippjuhid ehk nemad tunnetasid ka organisatsiooniga kõige tugevamat seotust. Vabadust, arengut ja iseseisvust hindasid kõige kõrgemalt ja olid nõus ka sellesse panustama spetsialistide gruppi kuulunud vastajad. Positsioon toimus ka moderaatorina paljude teiste tunnuste osas, valdavalt vähendades või kaotades nende mõju kohustuste tugevusele.

Kinnitust leidis ka kolmas uurimisväide töötaja kohustuste osas ja mittetäielikult tööandja kohustuste osas. Tööväärtusi hinnati D.Elizuri (1984, 1991) teoorial põhineva tööväärtuste konstruktsiooni abil, mis võimaldab luua vähemalt kuus väärtuste rühma. Analüüs näitas, et olulist mõju töötaja kohustuste tugevuse tajumisele osutasid kognitiivsed tööväärtused, mis olid positiivselt seotud kõigi, välja arvatud ühe, kohustustega. See näitab, et kognitiivsete väärtuste osa töötaja väärtussüsteemis määrab üldise tunnetatud kohustuste tugevuse taseme. Sama mõjuga oli ka tööga seotus ehk mida enam inimene määratleb end töö kaudu, seda suuremaid kohustusi ta endale võtab. Sama, kuid mitte nii tugev tendents ilmnis ka tööandja kohustuste osas. Teiste väärtuste mõju oli kohustusele spetsiifiline. Tööandja kohustuste tugevuse määramisel omasid individuaalsed tööväärtused oluliselt väiksemat mõju kui töötaja kohustuste osas. Tööandja tajutud kohustuste tugevuse hindamise osas kujunesid oluliseks teguriks sotsiaalsed ja afektiivsed väärtused. Sellised väärtused nagu võim, töötingimused, instrumentaalsed väärtused (tasu, hüvitised), töö variatiivsus ei omanud seoseid ühegi tööandja kohustusega või ilmnis see ühe või kahe osas.

Teine uurimus viidi läbi 2009. aastal ja keskendus eelkõige juhtide psühholoogiliste lepete uurimisele. Kasutati 2005. aastal koostatud küsimustiku modifitseeritud varianti. Psühholoogilisi leppeid uuriti juhtide kahest rollist lähtuvalt: juhid kui töötajad ja juhid kui organisatsiooni esindajad. Saadud tulemusi võrreldi omavahel ja teiste positsioonigruppide tulemustega.

Uurimuse jaoks moodustati kaks valimit. Töötajate valimis, mille suuruseks oli 818 vastajat, täitsid kõik osalejad küsimustiku töötaja positsioonilt lähtuvalt. Selles valimis 29,5% vastajatest olid erinevatel juhtimispositsioonidel, 28,9% olid lihttöölised ja 41,7% spetsialisti staatuses. 53,8% olid naised. Valimi keskmine vanus oli 38,5 ja keskmine tööstaaž ametikohal oli 6,7 aastat. 28,9% töötas avalikus sektoris, 41,7% erasektoris ja 14,4% olid hõivatud kolmandas sektoris.

Juhtide valimisse kuulus 147 erineval positsioonil juhti, kes täitsid küsimustiku organisatsiooni/tööandja esindaja positsioonilt. Neist 13,9% olid esmajuhid, 51,5% olid keskjuhid ja 34,7% olid tippjuhid või ettevõtte direktorid. 44,6% olid naised. Juhtide valimi keskmine vanus oli 39,1 (SD=9,67) aastat ja keskmine tööstaaž ametikohal 6,5 (SD= 5,22).

Teine uurimus kinnitas esimese uurimuse käigus saadud tulemusi tööpositsioonist tulenevate erinevuste kohta tajutud kohustuste tugevuse osas. Kõige suuremad erinevused ilmnisid lihttöötajate ja teiste positsioonigruppide vahel. Spetsialistide ja esmajuhtide psühholoogilised lepped olid oma struktuurilt sarnased. Samuti ei esinenud olulisi erinevusi esmajuhtidel psühholoogiliste lepete hindamisel kahest positsioonist lähtuvalt. Siinjuures jääb küsimuseks, kuivõrd esmajuhid tunnevad end organisatsiooni/tööandjate esindajatena.

Teises uurimuses leidis kinnitust ka neljas uurimisväide, et juhtide arusaam tööandja kohustustest töötajate suhtes ja ootused töötaja kohustuste osas on oluliselt mõjutatud nende endi psühholoogiliste lepete poolt. Kesk- ja tippjuhtide ootused ja seisukohad tööandja kohustuste osas sarnanesid nende kohustustega, mida nad

eeldavad tööandjal olevat nende suhtes. See kohustuste struktuur ei lange kokku lihttöötajate arusaamisega tööandja kohustuste osas. Lihttöötajad ootavad tööandjalt eelkõige stabiilset, turvalist töökeskkonda ja võrdset kohtlemist. Kesk ja tippjuhid aga näevad tööandja kohustusena eelkõige töötajate arengu toetamist. Samuti eeldavad juhid, et töötajad võtavad kohustuse olla paindlikud, organisatsioonile lojaalsed ja iseseisvamad. Lihttöötajate vastutuse määrad aga neis valdkondades ei küüni juhtide ootuste tasemele. Lihttöötajate grupi üldine töötajate kohustuste tugevuse tase jääb oluliselt madalamaks juhtide omast.

Peamised järeldused

Erinevuste seletamisel tööhoiakutes ja töötulemustes on töö- ja organisatsioonipsühholoogias valdavalt keskendunud demograafilistele faktoritele. Neid faktoreid peetakse kõige olulisemateks erinevuste seletamisel. PC kohustuste tugevuse erinevuste selgitamisel selgus, et demograafilised tegurid omavad tõesti seost töötaja kohustuste tugevusega, kuid need ei ole peamised faktorid. Kui muutujate mudelisse lisada töökonteksti tegurid, siis selgub, et positsioon organisatsioonis on kõige olulisem ja tugevam tegur, mis mõjutab nende kohustuste tugevust. Enamiku töötajate kohustuste osas toimib positsioon moderaatorina, muutes demograafiliste tegurite ja kohustuste vaheliste seoste tugevust. Nende seostega tuleb arvestada, sest töösituatsioonis ei ole võimalik lahutada demograafilisi ja töökontekstiga seotud tegureid.

Saadud tulemused näitavad vähest varieeruvust tööandja kohustuste osas. Ka ei olnud erinevused nende kohustuste tugevuste osas seletatavad töös kasutatud muutujate kaudu (demograafilised, töökonteksti tegurid ja tööväärtused). Siit järeldub, et tegureid, mis määravad nende kohustuste tugevust, tuleb otsida väljastpoolt töötajat ja töökonteksti iseloomustavaid tegureid. M.D.Rousseau (1989, 1994, 1995) oma varasemates töödes rõhutas sotsiaalmajanduslike tegurite osa PC kujunemisel. Tuginedes saadud tulemustele, saab eeldada, et tööandja kohustuste tugevus on määratletud üldisemate sotsiaalsete normide ja väärtuste poolt. Nende tegurite määratlemine peaks olema edasiste uuringute ülesandeks.

Kuna töötajate võimalused kujundada oma töökeskkonda on piiratud, siis oluline osa selles on juhtidel ja siin on olulised loodud töötaja ja tööandja vahelised suhted. Seetõttu on oluline mõista, millistest ootustest ja arusaamadest need suhted lähtuvad. Uurimuse tulemused näitavad, et juhtide endi psühholoogilised lepped erinevad oma kohustuste tugevuselt ja struktuurilt töötajate (eriti lihttöötajate) omadest ja samas mõjutavad nende arusaamu ja seisukohti tööandja kohustuste osas ning ootusi töötajate käitumisele nende kohustuste osas. Ehk ootused, mida juhid edastavad töötajatele nende käitumise ja vastutuse osas, ei lange kokku töötajate psühholoogiliste lepetega. Selle tulemuseks võib olla töötajate produktiivsuse ja töörahulolu langus, sest puudub arusaam ja kokkulangevus võetud ja eeldatavate kohustuste vastutuste osas.

Edasise uuringu võimalused

Töötaja psühholoogilised lepped on mõjutatud ka selle poolt, kuidas organisatsioonid reageerivad väliste tegurite survele. Erinevat tüüpi ettevõtteid on olnud erinevalt mõjutatud välistest muutustest, samuti mõjutavad erinevaid organisatsioone erinevad välistegurid. Et leida valdkonna ja organisatsiooni spetsiifilisi mõjusid ja erinevusi, tuleks järgnevatel uuringutes keskenduda nendele teguritele ja läbi viia organisatsioonikeskseid ja võrdlevaid uuringuid.

Teine uurimissuund peaks keskenduma psühholoogiliste lepete tunnusoonte täpsemale kirjeldamisele ja dimensionaalsete skaalade väljatöötamisele, kus oleksid esindatud mõlemad dimensiooni otstunnused.

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CURRICULUM VITAE

1. General information

Name: Liina Randmann
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2. Education and academic degrees

2013 – Estonian Business School, doctoral studies
1999 – 2005 Tallinn University of Technology, doctoral studies
1997 – 1999 Tallinn University of Technology, Department of Humanities;
Master of social sciences
1988 – 1992 University of Tartu, Faculty of Psychology, Diploma (Equal to
master degree)
1979 – 1983 University of Tallinn, Faculty of Physical Education; Diploma
(Equal to Bachelor's degree)

3. Employment

1999 – present Tallinn University of Technology; Lecturer of Chair of Psychology
1998 – 2002 Tallinn Sõle Gymnasium, school psychologist
1993 – 1997 Randvere family rehabilitation centre, psychologist
1991 – 1997 Tallinn Christian School-home, teacher, psychologist

4. Academic administration

2009 – Tallinn University of Technology, Faculty of Social Sciences;
member of Board

- 2009 – Tallinn University of Technology, Institute of Industrial Psychology; member of Board
- 2009 – Tallinn University of Technology; Institute of Industrial psychology; member of BA defence committees
- 2002 –2008 Tallinn University of Technology; Institute of Public Administration; member of BA defence committees
- 2002 – 2004 Tallinn University of Technology, Institute of Public Administration; member of Board

5. Additional information

In 2009 I was attributed the professional certificate of adult education specialist/ andragogue, level IV (level VI of the European qualifications framework)

I've been selected "The Teacher of Year 2006" by Tallinn University

I'm the member of EAWOP from 2005