

# Impact of Psychological Contract Violation on Information Technology-Based Educational Institutions of Kolkata and Suburbs



Saikat Chakrabarti, Ipseeta Satpathy, B.C.M Patnaik

**Abstract:** Human resources of any organization, industrial or educational, being rational in nature are highly responsive to any stimulus. Employees are human resources and are the only animate resources. So they need to be properly led and managed. To any organization or institution efficient and skilled employees are assets. So, the institutions always try to meet their expectations to avoid attrition. Desired outcome, therefore, demands deft and proper leadership. Failure in this field paves the way for Psychological Contract Violation (PCV), and the consequences follow accordingly. All candidates seeking job are not employable. Employable candidates are generally required to be skilful, intelligent and mentally prepared to cope up with upcoming changes and newer technological devices. This is more particularly true of IT-based educational organizations and institutions like engineering or technical and management colleges of Kolkata and suburban areas. Employees here are very conscious of what they get and what the employers committed while appointing them. If there is a gap between the two, chances of breaking psychological contract increase due to psychological contract breach or psychological contract violation. The authors here have compared effects of psychological contract violation on trust, commitment and turnover intention of working-staff of Kolkata's IT based technological institutions and those of suburban institutes. These are the geographic locations of focus. By means of convenience sampling they collected 257 data. After completing the data cleaning process they analyzed the same with the help of Statistical Package of Social Sciences (SPSS). Our contributions are: (a) identification of positive and significant relation between PCV and Affective Commitment (AC), (b) highlighting 'social factors' and 'time zone factors' and finally, (c) revelation of the fact that PCV may not be an indicator of turnover intention, while adopting changes and new technological devices. The steps taken at this point of time will determine whether employers are capable of avoiding psychological contract violation. PCV is a dynamic phenomenon.

*Future researchers may throw more light on other aspects, if any, of the issues concerned.*

**Keywords:** Psychological contract, psychological contract breach, psychological contract violation, turnover intention, inter correlation, regression, information technology.

## I. INTRODUCTION

In any educational institute human resources are the most precious resources. They act according to the decisions they take. Even in this age of information technology, no organization or institute can replace human resources. In the education sector the entire world has started adopting pedagogical changes by application of Information Technology (IT), Internet of Things (IoT), Virtual Reality (VR) and Augmented Reality (AR) as means of sharing knowledge. Application of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) too along with IT has become an inseparable part of modern education system. Still services rendered by human resources cannot in any way be undermined (Rath et al., 2019). Rather the importance of the human resources, particularly that of the IT employees in technology based educational institutions is gradually being felt. Now they have become the backbone of any educational institution. The geographic regions under discussion (Kolkata and suburbs) will carry the point home. Handling this valuable resource has become a challenging task for the employers (Chakrabarti et al., 2019). Employees in IT based educational institutions are intelligent resources. So, they always remain alert as to whether their employers are fulfilling all commitments made to them. If the employees feel there is a commitment-failure on the part of the employers, they become dissatisfied. Employees thus suffer the fallout of psychological contract violation. The consequences of PCV may be ranging from lowering the output to withdrawal from job (Chaubey and Bisht, 2016). If the trust of the employees in any organization is affected because of psychological contract violation, it may affect commitment of the employees and they may intend to leave. Now-a-days it has become necessary to investigate the effect of PCV on trust and other components like commitment towards organization and also intention to leave. Researchers have set a questionnaire with the help of the following two scales: (a) The psychological contract violation scale proposed by Robinson and Rousseau in 1994, and was used to check whether employers have failed to comply with their own commitments.

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It is also used to assess the existence of trust and (b) Mayer and Allen (1997) scale. This one is used to measure organizational commitment of employees of the IT-based educational institutions of Kolkata and suburban areas. The original dichotomous questions in the first scale have been converted into a five point rating scale. After designing the questionnaire the present researchers have distributed the same among the employees of the targeted institutions. Collection of responses being over, they found some of the respondents (57) left quite a few questions unanswered. The researchers started their analysis only with the valid and complete data received from the respondents. They also did regression analysis and checked mean, standard deviation and inter-correlation. Finally before arriving at the conclusion, a comparative study was done on the statistical mean of the employees of Kolkata IT based institutions and those of the suburban institutions.

## A. Psychological Contract

Psychological Contract was the brain-child of Argyris who brought it into light in 1960. Later it was further used by Denise Rousseau in 1989. Retaining effective and performing employees for a long term in the interest of the institution or organization very often seems to be a problem for the employers (Kraak et al., 2017). Even after providing them with the best possible facilities and benefits, sometimes employers fail to retain their skilled and experienced employees. Organizational researchers tried to find out the key-reasons of attrition and marked break of psychological contract as a major ones (Chakrabarti et al., 2019). This psychological contract is made of a sense or feeling arising out of mutual mental bonding of both the parties, i.e., management and the employees. This contract is thus the result of some bilateral and mutual expectations (Bankins, 2015). Break in psychological contract either in the form of breach or in the form of violation affects institutions or organizations. Here the researchers have laid stress specially on psychological contract violation and have assessed its effect on employees of IT based educational institutions of Kolkata and suburbs.

## B. Psychological Contract Violation

A feeling of dissatisfaction of employees against their employer generally gives rise to what is known as Psychological Contract Violation (PCV). This dissatisfaction is caused when employees labour under the impression that their employers have failed to keep some or many of the commitments which they made at the time when employees joined the institution or organization. The consequences of this violation can be anything from affecting the output of the work to complete withdrawal from work. The fall-out can even go to the length of betrayal (Morrison and Robinson, 1997). The chances of psychological contract violation increase with the corresponding increase in expectation-gap between the said two parties (Knights and Kennedy, 2005). An attempt has been made by the present authors to conduct a survey for finding out the effects of psychological contract violation on trust, organizational commitment and turnover intention.

## C. Organizational Commitment

The term organizational commitment can be explained as a sense of bonding and employees' psychological attachment with their work-field or institution. This is what makes the employees' attitude more productive. More commitments mean more chances of productivity. According to Folorunso et al. (2014), organizational commitment-dimensions are very important and they affect the performance of the academic staff of institutions. The problem of the organizations lies not only in the scarcity of skilled resources, but, also in a scarcity of committed human resources (Chelliah et al., 2015). Organizational commitment has three dimensions i) Affective commitment, ii) Normative commitment and iii) Continuance commitment.

- i) Affective Commitment (AC) represents emotional output and behavioural pattern. The attachment and involvement of employees with their organization are known as affective commitment (Folorunso et al., 2014).
- ii) Normative commitment is the moral obligation of employees to the organization. It refers to employees' sense of responsibility which sometimes compels them to stay with their organization. So, they cannot think of attrition (Chelliah, 2015).
- iii) Continuance commitment is related to employees' intention to continue with the same job in the same organization. They intend to stay for some obvious reasons like the fact that some factors always remain non-transferable in nature. These are peer group, retirement benefits etc. Employees once committed to such contract would find it difficult to leave the organization (Miller and Lee, 2001).

In this article researchers have examined the effects of psychological contract violation from the standpoint of these three aforesaid dimensions of commitment.

## D. Trust

Organizational trust is a feeling of employees that if their organization cannot do anything good, it will never do any harm to them. Employees believe, their organization will definitely try to do good for them. Effective leadership and managerial capability may create an environment of trust among the employees (Erkutlu and Chafra, 2013). Employees' feeling, if any, of psychological contract violation on the part of the employers will adversely affect the element of trust. Here the researchers have wanted to observe possible effects of PCV particularly on trust.

## E. Turnover Intention

Turnover intention can be either voluntary or compulsory. When employees leave the organization because of some dissatisfaction of their own, it becomes an example of voluntary affair. When organizations compel any employee to leave, it becomes compulsory in nature. When employees join the organization, they cherish some hopes and ideas based on the commitments of their employers.

If they match employees' expectations, the employees become satisfied and never think of leaving their organization or institution. Again, if there is any expectation-gap, employees voluntarily want to leave the organization. Discussion on the impact of psychological contract violation on turnover intention is important. So, the present researchers have emphasized the point while discussing the effects of PCV.

## II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

According to Kraak et al. (2017), to understand employee-identity and their psychological contract is an important task of the employers. The said authors also have pointed out certain areas which have certain factors having considerable impact on psychological contract violation and some indirect impacts too on tendency of turnover. Chaubey and Bisht (2016) in their article examined whether there is any relation between psychological contract and job satisfaction. Biswas (2016) in his article examined the psychological contract violation (PCV) and organizational or institutional scepticism in the administration. This study also examined psychological contract violation, leader-member exchange variables and the influence of the same on occupational behaviour at individual level and at group level. Shahnawaz and Goswami (2011) made a comparative study on organizations of public and private ownership from the standpoint of effects of PCV. According to this study the occurrence of psychological contract is less in number in public sector than in private sector. The authors reached this conclusion after they had carried out a study in comparison between the statistical mean-value of both the sectors. Erkutlu and Chafra (2013) drew our attention to the impact of trust of employees and violation of psychological contract. So far as the association with authentic leadership and organizational deviant behaviour are concerned, the authors made mention of these factors while comparing between trust of employees and violation of psychological contract by employers. The study of Hamel (2009) laid emphasis on psychological contract violation and its consequences while presenting their new theory. In their study Mohamad and Badawy (2016), found the mediating and moderating effect of cynicism and expectation of the organizational employees of private universities. They noticed certain effects of psychological contract violation on affective commitment. Chakrabarti et al. (2019) in their study made mention of two causes of breaking psychological contract of IT employees. The two causes which have been identified are psychological contract violation and psychological contract breach. Gadhai and Mishra (2019) highlighted gender budgeting in their article. The importance and influence of demographic variables like age, gender on psychological contract and attrition were discussed in the article authored by Chakrabarti et al. (2019). In a review-based article Satpathy et al. (2018) also referred to some literatures showing the influence of gender on psychological contract. This found support in the article written by Satpathy et al. (2019). Sayers et al. (2011) stressed workplace incivility and psychological contract violation. Workplace incivility refers to scanty regards for others while working in an institution or organization. Here the authors made an attempt to find out the relation between the two factors mentioned above. According to Knights and Kennedy (2005) psychological contract violation has a negative

relation with job contentment. It has a negative relation also with organizational or occupational commitment. Organizational commitment, according to Chelliah et al. (2015), is the sense of accountability that an employee is expected to possess in achieving the goal, mission and vision of an organization. If employees feel that their employers are satisfying all the conditions and commitments, made to their employees at the time of recruitment, chances of maintaining organizational commitment on the part of the employees too is high. In case of any gap between employees' expectation created by the employer and what the employees actually get, chances of psychological contract violation is high. This in turn affects organizational commitment. Folorunso et al. (2014) in their research-article pointed out the effects of the different dimensions of organizational commitment on the staff of educational institutions. Result of their research shows that the said dimensions either in a singular or combined manner affect the performance of the said set of the staff concerned.

## III. OBJECTIVES

- To study how psychological contract violation affects trust, organizational commitment and turnover-intention.
- To make a comparative study between the impacts of psychological contract violation on employees of information technology-based educational institutions of Kolkata and on similar employees of suburban institutions.

## IV. METHODOLOGY

In the present study the researchers have collected data from 257 employees from different IT based educational institutions. Among those 257 respondents, 57 did not submit the completed questionnaire. They left many of the questions unanswered. So, they were not considered. From the respondents whose answers were found to be full and complete in all respect were selected for our consideration. 100 were from various IT based educational institutes of Kolkata and the rest were from different suburban IT based educational institutions. The geographic region of the present study is confined in Kolkata and suburban areas. Here IT-based educational institutions include engineering, technological and management colleges and universities. The researchers used convenience sampling method to collect data. These data were collected through a prepared questionnaire on PCV and on the other constructs to serve the purpose of the objectives of our study. While designing the questionnaire the researchers have taken the help of some widely used tools and have selected certain items from each of them. The psychological contract violation scale was developed by Robinson and Rousseau in 1994. This scale had three items. Originally it had dichotomous questions. In the present study, however, the researchers have used five-point rating scale. The scale here was meant for forming an idea as to whether failed to fulfil some or many of their commitments to the employees. The construct PCV here has been taken as a unidimensional one.



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In the process, the researchers have got the PCV score. Croanbach alpha value is 0.815. In the present study trust is another construct and this is also unidimensional. The same (Robinson and Rousseau, 1994) scale was used to identify the level of employees' trust in their employers. For the present study five items were selected from this scale by the researchers to get an idea on trust. The Croanbach alpha value was noted to be 0.87. Organizational commitment (OC). It has been tested by Mayer and Allen (1997) scale. The three dimensions of organizational commitment on which the researchers have focused are Affective commitment (AC), Continuance commitment (CC) and Normative commitment (NC). Each of them has six items. The construct has eighteen items altogether. Each question has options right from 'fully accepted' to 'totally rejected'. The reliability value of AC CC and NC are 0.86, 0.78 and 0.83 respectively. Finally, turnover intention was found with the help of Michigan Organizational Assessment Questionnaire (Comman et al., 1979). This is a three-item scale. Croanbach alpha value has been noted to be 0.83.

## IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Nothing is more constant and permanent than change itself. In this changing business scenario, if the change in the behavioural dynamics is well-understood, it would help the administrative authority to take decisions (Endrejat et al., 2019). It has become really important to understand the mutual obligations and expectations of employers and employees in this ever changing academic climate and business environment. Psychological contract has a role to play here. The implicit nature of this contract may often become the cause of violation. The present study has made an attempt to explore how trust, turnover intention and organizational commitment of the employees of IT-based educational institutions of Kolkata and suburban areas are affected by PCV. This is why regression analysis has been done by the present researchers.

Table-1 represents mean (statistical), standard deviations (SDs) and inter-correlations among employees of IT-based educational institutions of Kolkata. The abbreviation PCV stands for Psychological Contract Violation. Other abbreviations are as follows: AC is Affective Commitment, CC is Continuance Commitment and NC denotes Normative commitment. This is basically known as the three dimensions of Organizational Commitment (OC). The present researchers have dealt with Turnover Intention as TI. The correlations with significant values have been marked with star (\*). The signs in front of each value shows how are they related, i.e., the direction of the relations. Table – 2 shows data of the IT based educational institutions of suburbs. All other terms remain same as those of Table-1.

**Table 1. Mean, SDs. and Inter-correlations within all the variables for data collected from IT-based educational institutes of Kolkata:**

Variable	Mean	SD	PCV	AC	CC	NC	Trust	TI
PCV	6.56	2.01	1	-0.32*	-0.18	0.08	-0.09	0.18
AC	18.99	1.97	-	1	0.21	-0.24	0.19	-0.10
CC	16.83	2.96	-	-	1	0.30*	-0.18	0.04

NC	14.65	2.18	-	-	-	1	-0.35*	0.21
Trust	20.21	2.37	-	-	-	-	1	0.20
TI	5.98	1.55	-	-	-	-	-	1

Note: \* Level of significance is 0.05

**Table 2. Mean, SDs. and Inter-correlations within all the variables for data collected from Suburban IT based educational institutes:**

Variable	Mean	SD	PCV	AC	CC	NC	Trust	TI
PCV	8.02	1.97	1	-0.01	-0.34*	-0.10	-0.05	-0.11
AC	18.14	2.96	-	1	-0.02	-0.05	0.04	0.04
CC	18.68	2.76	-	-	1	0.08	0.05	0.08
NC	18.30	2.99	-	-	-	1	-0.17	0.37*
Trust	20.39	2.62	-	-	-	-	1	-0.16
TI	8.86	1.83	-	-	-	-	-	1

Note: \* Level of significance is 0.05

Table-3 presents the impact of psychological contract violation on organizational commitment and its three dimensions. The result shows that all these three dimensions are positively influenced in case of Kolkata institutes. The influence is negative in case of suburban institutes. Result also reveals separately the impact of PCV on three dimensions, in case of affective commitment the effect is more significant in Kolkata's IT-based institutions than in those of suburban areas. When the researchers have considered the continuance and normative commitment, they have found the effect of PCV is more in suburban institutions than in Kolkata ones. PCV and affective commitment are having a positive relation in case of Kolkata's institutions and negative with the suburban IT based educational institutions. Thus the effect is very significant. This negative relation was anticipated, but, the significant positive relation in Kolkata institutes, discussed above, is beyond expectation of the researchers. This is to mention here that the data have been collected from those educational institutions where the changes in teaching-learning methodology have been adopted. By doing so, the institutions are insisting their employees to learn and apply Information and Communication Technology (ICT)-based teaching methods, Augmented Reality (AR), Information Technology (IT), Virtual Reality (VR) and Internet of Things (IoT) – these techniques may be put into practice in classroom teaching. It should also be mentioned here that the data have been collected in the recent past (Data collection time: last week of December 2018 to second week of June 2019). When the researchers collected the data 77.34% of the respondents prioritized job security over other benefits in the backdrop of changing economic scenario. Some of the respondents even said that they were ready to adopt any kind of technological change for the sake of continuation of the job in their organization. The mean PCV score of suburban institutions is more than that of Kolkata institutes. According to the opinions of the respondents, the condition in the IT-based institutes of Kolkata is better.

Possibly this is the reason why the researchers have found a positive and significant relation between PCV and affective commitment in Kolkata’s IT-based institutions. This is a notable contribution highlighted in the present article. Even if there are a few evidences of contract violation, employees of the IT based educational institutions of Kolkata are more positively attached to their organizations. Influence of PCV on normative commitment is positive and insignificant in Kolkata’s IT based educational institutions. On the other hand, it is negative in suburbs. This negative influence is negligible. Normative commitment is related to morality. It assists us to take decision as to what is good or bad for an organization. Again, continuance commitment and PCV are positively related in Kolkata-based institutions. The relation is completely opposite in suburban areas. Continuance commitment is related to cost and benefit.

**Table 3. Employees of both Kolkata and Suburban IT based educational institutions: regression analysis of PCV as a predictor of three different commitment components**

	Kolkata Institutions			Suburban Institutions		
	AC	CC	NC	AC	CC	NC
R	0.32	0.11	0.05	-0.04	-0.32	-0.09
R square	0.102	0.012	0.002	0.001	0.102	0.008
Stand. Error	1.95	2.97	2.96	1.97	1.62	2.12
F value	4.72**	1.32	0.401	0.002	4.85**	0.74

Note: \*\* Level of significance is 0.01

The effect of PCV on trust has been shown in Table 4. The table shows the said effect on both the Kolkata and suburban IT based educational institutions. It may be observed that the effect of PCV on trust is found to be more in Kolkata institutions than in suburban ones. When the researchers surveyed literature, they found evidence of negative relation between PCV and trust (Whitener, 2001; Johnson and O’Leary-Kelly, 2003 and Tzafrir et al., 2004). This is quite different from the present result. According to Whitener (2001), trust is developed through social exchanges like organizational practices, work environment, procedure of doing work and treatment which the employees receive in organization from their colleagues. Employees of any organization or institution have their own interpretation of social-exchange procedures of their organization and they reciprocate accordingly. If employees of any organization are sure that their employers care for them, they would be more loyal to their employer. This is the basis of developing trust (Tzafrir et al., 2004). Psychological contract breach occurs if employees of an organization labour under the impression that their employer is not meeting all or many of their commitments which they made at the time of recruiting the employees. However, the present study has a quite different result. Here it is quite in the fitness of things to mention that this article of ours highlights significant mean values of contract violation. In case of Kolkata educational institutions, it is 6.56 and in suburban educational institution the value is 8.02 (which is within the range of the score 3-15). The result shows that contract violation is more in degree and number in suburban institutions. The difference is not much. Yet, it

seems that the difference is not merely due to exchange principles on which trust is dependent. It also includes other social factors and perspectives extending beyond the organizational boundaries. Here respondents are sensitive to circumstance. To address the matter properly, we have to consider the time factor, i.e., *when* most of the educational institutions (from where we collected data) are trying to adopt ICT and IT-enabled education system. This is why the role played by employees of these IT based institutions has to be reckoned with. If the employees are treated well, the chances of PCV would be minimized. During survey many respondents said that they wanted to continue with their present organization because of this trust-factor. They have profound trust in their organization. They firmly believe that their organization will help them in adopting the changes. Herein lies the second contribution of our study in identifying the influence of *Time Zone factor* and *Social Factor*. This point may be carried home with the support of the earlier literature (Tzafrir et al., 2004). Some of the respondents also mentioned that if they cannot cope up with the changes, their organization will arrange alternative means for them; the employers will never ask them to leave. R and R square values are insignificant. There too, we have got better result in Kolkata institutes.

**Table 4. Regression analysis of PCV on trust for the employees of IT based educational institutions of both Kolkata and Suburban areas:**

	Kolkata Institutions	Suburban Institutions
R	0.08	0.04
R square	0.006	0.001
Stand. Error	2.48	2.37
F value	0.25	0.75

Note : Level of significance 0.01

For the employees of both Kolkata and suburban IT based educational institutions Table-5 shows the fall-out of psychological contract violation (PCV) on turnover intention. A look at the result reveals that Kolkata institutes score better than suburban institutes. Here the researchers have found relationship is less and value-wise the corresponding influence is also less significant. It is, according to the researchers, quite upto their expectation. In some of the earlier literatures (authored by Suazo, Turnley and Mai, 2005, Turnley and Feldman, 1999 and Robinson and Rousseau, 1994) they have found similar results. Data have been collected at a time when the institutions were in the process of undergoing changes and adopting new technological devices. The result reveals that the employees rarely opt for voluntary turnover and want to continue with their present job. This has led the researchers to infer that PCV may not be an indicator of turnover intention at the time of adopting changes. This is another contribution of the present researchers.

**Table 5. For the employees of IT-based educational institutions of both Kolkata and suburban areas: regression analysis showing PCV as an independent variable and intention to turnover as a dependent one**

	Kolkata Institutions	Suburban Institutions
R	0.21	0.12
R square	0.044	0.014
Stand. Error	1.91	1.97
F value	1.51	0.378

Note: \*\* Level of significance is 0.01

## VI. CONCLUSION

During the process of change employees generally suffer from a sense of uncertainty, tension and anxiety. While adopting pedagogical changes, general employees feel that if they cannot cope up with the upcoming changes, their employment may be at stake. Employees of the IT based institutions have to play a responsible role in such cases. They should restore a sense of confidence in the mind of the other general employees suffering from a feeling of insecurity in service. Thus the staff of the IT-based educational institutions including the core IT-employees are required and expected to serve as change –agents. The research has been done on the backdrop of inviting and practicing IT and ICT-based pedagogical changes in teaching-learning methods. Our contributions primarily are in identification of positive and significant relation between PCV and Affective Commitment (AC), introduction of ‘social factors’ and ‘time zone factor’, and finally revelation of the fact that PCV may not be an indicator of turnover intention, while adopting changes and new technological devices. The steps taken at this point of time will determine whether employers are in a position to avoid psychological contract violation. In case of any strategic mistake on the part of the administration, the employees may hold their organization responsible for psychological contract violation. This article has a positive role to play in maintaining employers’ brand image too. Future researchers may carry on further study on the relevant issues which have not been covered in the above discussion on psychological contract violation. Should they like so, they may also apply mixed methodology for the purpose.

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