

EXAMINING PSYCHOLOGICAL CONTRACT AMONG JAPANESE COACHES

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Abstract

Coaches play important roles in the successful performance of their teams. On the other hand, the pressure to win as well as keeping high expectations on athletic performance has led to a higher rate of job turnover for many (Greenberg, 2001). Previous research indicates that the success in coaching profession and the continuity of a job are highly dependent on coaches' winning records. Nonetheless, not all coaches experience the same conditions and expectations (Greenberg & Smith, 2007). In fact, there are significant differences among coaches' positions, salaries, types of sports, and profiles of the school at which they work. In this connection, coaches' intentions to continue their current jobs would not only depend on their ability to successfully fulfill their expectations, but also on other non-contractual conditions, such as the opportunity to advance in their careers, the level of challenge on their jobs, the quality of working conditions and the sense of being fairly treated (Lester, Turnley, Bloodgood, & Bolino 2002). In the human resource management literature, the influences of these non-contractual conditions are commonly known as the idea of psychological contract (Rousseau, 1995).

Grounded in social exchange theory (Blau, 1964), psychological contract is referred to "employees' perceptions of what they owe to their employers and what employers owe to them (Robinson, 1996, p. 574)." Therefore, psychological contract relies on the subjective interpretation and belief between an employee and his or her organization and is based on perceptions of informal non-contractual agreements. The importance of psychological contract lies in an organization's stability and continuance. The breach of psychological contracts may result in negative consequences for both employees and organizations since it reduces the level of employee commitment which ultimately increases the likelihood to voluntarily leave an organization among employees (Restubog, Bordia, & Tang, 2006; Turnley, Bolino, Lester, & Bloodgood, 2003).

The purpose of this study was two folds: First, we examine the measures of psychological contract, using data collected from Japanese coaches. Second, the current investigation attempted to examine the effect of psychological contract fulfillment (PCF) on employee-related outcomes (i.e., job satisfaction, commitment, trust, turnover intention). Two hundred Japanese swimming coaches responded for this study. The average age of the respondents was 44.13 years old (SD = 10.62). 51.8% (n=103) of the respondents were male, while 48.2% were female (n=96). Fulltime coaches were almost half of the respondents (51.8%; n=99), and head coaches were 39.4% (n=75).

The questionnaire included scales that measure five dimensions (transactional, relational, training, generic, and resource support) of PCF (Robinson & Morrison, 1995), job satisfaction (Dunham & Smith, 1979), affective commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1991), and turnover intention (Cohen, 1998). The PCF scale was examined using a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). The results indicate that the proposed measurement model was an acceptable fit to the data (chi-square/df = 2.67, $p < .01$; CFI = .98; NNFI = .97; RMSEA] = .09). CFA also provided evidence of construct validity for the items, as noted by the factor loadings ranging from .65 to .94. Construct reliability ranged from .82 to .92, indicating the PCF dimensions were internally consistent. In order to investigate the effects of the five PCF dimensions on employee-related outcomes, a series of multiple regression analyses were performed. In relation to job satisfaction, the dimension of transactional contract had a significant effect (bjob satisfaction = 31, $p < .01$), while the effects of the other dimensions were not statistically significant. The results further indicate that affective commitment and turnover intention were significantly influenced by the dimension of generic contract (b affective commitment = .24, $p < .05$; b turnover intention = -.25, $p < .05$). The ability of the PCF dimensions to explain the variation in the outcome variables was assessed by R² values. The R² values for job satisfaction, affective commitment, and turnover intention were .18, .15, and .23, respectively. Based on the measurement model of PCF and its impact on outcome variables, implications were drawn, concerning construct and predictive validity.

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