

DISSERTATION

Nature of Psychological Contract in Toy Stores

MA Human Resource Management

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DECLARATION

I declare that all the work contained in this dissertation is entirely my own, except where appropriately referenced to the originating source, and referenced in the Bibliography section.

I affirm that no part of this work has previously been submitted in support of any application for an academic qualification at Dublin Business School or any other academic institution.

Signed:

Eresi Grace Okoh

Date.....

14th August 2014

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ABSTRACT

Psychological contract has attracted a lot of attention in recent years, the turbulent market situation has more or less contributed to the increased attention especially as the weight of research points to the attendant negative impact psychological contract can have on organisations that mishandles or neglects the psychological contract. This has made it imperative that psychological contract is studied in its totality in order to avoid or minimise the instances of breach. This includes exploring the nature of psychological contract guiding the employee-employer relation at any point in time failing which organisations may pay dearly for failure to consider the full implications of psychological contracts in today's working environment.

This study investigates the nature of psychological contract in toy stores Ireland by means of a qualitative research process. Two major and most common compartmentalization of psychological contract was rigorously studied by means of review of appropriate literatures on general psychological contract owing to the fact that there is limited research carried out particularly on nature of psychological contract, most research has been on breach and violation of psychological contract.

Using Rousseau's PCI (psychological contract inventory) on employee and employer obligations, research questions were modified and framed and around the PCI. The results and findings are by means of a qualitative research process based on the inductive grounded theory which saw to the emergent themes being analysed within the context of the research objective.

The results depicts that the nature of psychological contract in toy stores Ireland is a transactional one. It highlights the current trend of employees being responsible for managing

their own careers and seeking employability security as against seeking to hold on to their jobs for a lengthy period of time (job security).

This study equally resulted in the findings that employees and employers are in tune with obligations expected of each other within the workings of the present psychological contract in place.

Suggestions on how to manage psychological to towards achieving a committed workforce in realisation of organisations goal was also offered.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Nature of Psychological Contract in Toy Stores Ireland.

1.2 Background for the Research

“The primary vehicle managers have for making firms successful is the psychological contracts they create with workers.” McDermott, A, et al (2013)

The above quotation no doubt rings true, positive and has been vigorously canvassed by scholars. It has been long settled that people are the soul of business and that in order for organisations to survive and have a competitive edge; its workforce must be committed enough to make the difference.

The quest to make success of employee- employer relations has ultimately led to a vast array of literature on psychological contract but mostly focused on consequences of perceived contract breaches and violations; this has attracted considerable research attention,

McDermott, A, et al (2013); Coyle-Shapiro et al (2008); Walker, WJ,(2013). Not much attention has been given to the nature of psychological contract in the retail sector particularly toy stores; there is little or no literature in this regard. Hence the purpose of this research which is aimed towards filling the existing gap. As a result, our secondary data will be mostly reliant on the general literature on psychological contract.

Psychological contract is simply defined as the “Perception of two parties, employee and employer, of what their mutual obligations are towards each other.” CIPD factsheets (2013) These obligations includes but not limited to offer of commitment and loyalty by employees’ in return for job security, pay increase, promotions, training and development by the employer, **CIPD factsheets (2013); Ivan Robertson and Cary Cooper (2001)**

These expectations and obligations have more or less become casualties of turbulent economic climate, globalization and technological innovations in recent times which in turn have led to a lot of changes in employment relations. Resulting in wide spread redundancies, downsizing, restructuring and cuts/reductions in contract hours.

Lending their voice to the above, Ivan Robertson and Cary Cooper (2001, pg. 379) opined that “Changes in economic and political life, with the attendant collapse of traditional organisation designs and structures (through mass downsizing, streamlining and the contracting-out of peripheral functions) severally undermined conventional forms of employee-employer exchange (e.g. job security and career prospects offered in exchange for loyalty and commitment)” This has meant that the traditional employment relations (traditional psychological contract) are on the demise and gradually being replaced by a new one especially in the retail sector which underwent a lot of cost cutting measures to survive the recession. Some of the cost cutting measures included redundancies, down ward review of contract hours, more work load, less training and development, pay cuts and freezes. All

these changes have persuaded people to take the psychological contract serious, CIPD Change agenda (2013)

These changes may sometimes be perceived by employees as breach of psychological contract. The weight of research indicates that instances of psychological contract breach have the potential to negatively impact on an organisation, Change agenda CIPD (2013). Buttressing this, McDermott, et al (2013) sustains that “contract beliefs and their fulfilment are strongly related to employees’ job performance...” and carries with it consequences for employee performance and morale, Ivan Robertson and Cary Cooper (2001).

Taking into perspective the consequence of perceived breach or violation of Psychological contract, it has become vital that managers understand the impact of these changes and the present nature of psychological contract as perceived by their employees’, manage and work to sustain a positive psychological contract if the adverse consequences are to be avoided.

However some researchers are of the strong persuasion that the old psychological contract still exists and in fact still alive notwithstanding argument of changes brought about by the economic pressure being witnessed. CIPD factsheets (2013)

Building on all the above, it has become imperative to look seriously into the present realities of employee and employer expectations and obligations to one another in toy stores and its purported effect on the performance of organisation.

1.3 Research Objectives

This research intends to look at the nature of psychological contracts in toy stores, highlight the important role psychological contract plays in organisations that wish to succeed by getting the most out of its human capital and how, if managed properly can lead to achievement of organisational goals bearing in mind the challenges being faced in face of changes brought about by unstable and turbulent economic times.

1.4 Research Questions

The research questions are intended and designed in such a way to help meet the research objectives which is finding the Nature of psychological contract in toy stores- the basis of this research. The research questions are intended to gather information rich in nature by way of in-depth interviews using the inductive approach as a part of the qualitative research method.

To ensure the research questions posed in the course to this research are relevant to the study, questions were adopted and modified to suit the purpose of this research from Rousseau's (2008) Psychological Contract Inventory. This research questions were also backed up by research findings that have shown that have shown that the state of psychological contract in place in an organisation may have a negative or positive impact on its performance, Dharmawardena, Kheeran,(2009). See appendix 1 and 2 for the research questions.

1.5 Recipients for Research

The primary recipient of this research is Dublin Business School (DBS). Since it is an academic work it is expected to contribute to literature on psychological contract for the benefits of students and professionals. It will also keep organisations and employees better informed on the present nature of psychological contract in their relevant sector.

To illustrate the relevance of this research work, the researcher will embark on findings to ascertain the nature of psychological contract in toys stores, it will also find out if employees' and employers in toy stores Ireland are in tune with expectations from each other and finally make suggestions on how to manage psychological contract in toys stores.

1.6 Structure of the Dissertation

This paper is structured as follows: firstly we will discuss broadly the meaning of psychological contract together with breach and violation of psychological contract. The next section will see us delving into types of contracts, followed by importance of psychological contract. The third section will discuss the present nature of psychological contract, the traditional and contemporary (new deal) will be discussed as we try to draw the similarities with the relational and transactional psychological contract. The fourth section will see us illustrating our key argument with qualitative data drawn from the study outlined above, with suggestions on how to manage psychological contract before finishing with our conclusions.

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This purpose of literature review is to demonstrate the researcher's familiarity with what has been written, what is already known and what is relevant to the research topic and not to provide a summary of everything that has been written on the research topic. The purpose of literature review also includes helping to refine research questions and objectives, drawing attention to overlooked research possibilities, discovering and recommending further research and to help avoid repeating works that have already been done, Mark Saunders et al (2009)

In order to get the right materials for this literature review, the researcher embarked on previewing various secondary data before properly reading to get informed of its relevance to the literature review, also the researcher engaged in dialogue with herself and the issues and ideas at stake as suggested by Mark Saunders et al (2009)

In the course of this literature review, researches that has already been undertaken in the area of psychological contract will be evaluated, key points and trends will be pointed out and presented in a logical way to show the relationship to the research objective at hand, proper referencing of various literature as they come up will be equally be done as posited by Mark Saunders et al (2009). This review is also intended to enable readers see the ideas surrounding the background of previously published research in the area of nature of psychological contract.

2.2 What is Psychological Contract?

Although there have been numerous literature on psychological contract, there is still little agreement over its definition which has evolved since the time the term psychological contract was coined. Hiltrop (1996) posits that psychological contract “are deemed to be voluntary, subjective, informal and dynamic,” These features seems to be the re-occurring themes that will be seen in subsequent definition.

Generally speaking, there are two types of contract of employment, written and unwritten. The written is most times referred to as formal contract of employment and enforceable in law courts, while the unwritten contract of employment which is our focus is informal and imprecise usually inferred from perception of mutual obligations guiding the relationship between employee and employer. These obligations are usually in form of expectations or promises and mostly subjective in nature. This has led to most researchers describing the psychological contract as “a deep and varied concept which is open to a various interpretations and theoretical studies”, Raulapati, Vipparthi and Neti, (2010)

Psychological contract is concerned mostly with the unwritten contract of employment stemming out of mutual obligations and expectations. Though it may not be strictly enforceable in law court “it may be more influential than a formal contract in affecting how employees behave from day to day.” CIPD Factsheets (2013). Hence, its importance to the success of organisations cannot be overstated. The unwritten contract also differs from the written legal contracts in terms of steps and procedures followed when contract is breached while for psychological contract, employee may choose to withdraw from the relationship or withhold contributions, Maguire Heather (2003).

An important transition worth taken note of is the suggestions that the earlier definitions of psychological contract was done within the context of implicit/unwritten contract. The

definitions and understanding has evolved with renewed understanding and latter constructs of psychological contract definitions having factored in both explicit/written forms (transactional) and implicit/unwritten (relational) aspects in subsequent works on psychological contract, Ivan Robertson & Cary Cooper (2001)

The development of psychological contract has two distinct phases from the period of 1958 to 1988 and from 1989 onward with the Rousseau's (1989) reconceptualization of the psychological contract –this has had great influence on contemporary works and has signalled a transition from earlier works, Coyle-Shapiro et al, (2008).

Argyris was the first to introduce the term psychological contract in the 1960s. He described it as “an underwritten agreement that exists between an individual and the organisation when undertaking terms of employment”, Coyle-Shapiro et al, (2008). Coyle-Shapiro argued that “the idea of the employment relationship as an exchange can be traced to the writings of Bernard (1938) and March and Simon (1958)” where a remarkable semblance was drawn between reciprocal exchange and the core tenets of psychological contract.

It is argued that the concept of psychological contract started to gain popularity among scholars in the 1980s, Ivan Robertson and Cary Cooper (2001, Pg. 377). According to William H. Turnley and Daniel C. Feldman (2000) the perceptions of individuals that their organizations have implicitly or explicitly agreed to provide certain rewards to them in return for contributions made to the organization led to the emergence of psychological contract.

Contemporary researches on psychological contract which has signalled a transition from early works was triggered by Rousseau's (1998) seminal article, her definition of psychological contract as “an individual's beliefs concerning the mutual obligations that exist between him/herself and the employer(...) conversely, the psychological contract shifted from capturing the two parties to the exchange and their contingent interplay to an

individual's perception of both parties' obligations in the exchange", Coyle-Shapiro et al, (2008).

Perhaps, Rousseau,DM (1995) may have put it better by alluding that psychological contract is characterised by beliefs pertaining to reciprocal obligations. Simply put, psychological contract is the perceived mutual obligations owed to one another arising from employee and employer relationship bordering on promises made either explicitly or implicitly, fulfilment of which hinges on the fulfilment of the obligations and promises of the other party to the contract. It is mostly informal in nature, Alan Price, (2007); Ivan Robertson and Cary Cooper (2001).

Consistent among many definitions is the notion that it is unwritten, informal and based on perceived mutual obligations or belief of both employer and employees. This makes it abstract and most times difficult to grasp, it has been widely argued to operate on the basis of "reciprocity and exchange..." Ivan Robertson and Cary cooper (2001 pg. 378); Michael Muller-Camen et al (2008)

This obligation when 'inferred from actions or what has happened in the past', would be viewed as "expectation ". When inferred from statements made by the employer mostly during process of recruitment or performance appraisal is often viewed as a promise from employer to employee, CIPD factsheets (2013). This distinction is necessary to point out as will be seen in the course of this work especially as both unmet expectations and unfulfilled promises carry different reactions from employees.

2.3 Implications of Psychological Contract Breach or/and

Violation

This area seems to be a hot topic considering the amount of research that has been conducted into the breach and violation of psychological contract. It is a well-researched area of psychological contract, the subjectivity of contract terms makes it difficult for the inadvertent violation breach or violation, Coyle-Shapiro et al (2008).

Prior to the works of Morrison and Robinson (1997) researchers have used the word violation and breach interchangeably without distinguishing between the two in terms of cognition and emotion, contract violation captures emotional experience which includes emotional distress, feelings of betrayal, anger and wrongful harm, while contract breach captures a cognitive awareness that a breach has occurred, it does not lead to feeling of violation, Coyle-Shapiro et al (2008).

It has been repeatedly argued that “psychological contract violation damages the very foundation of the relationship that exists between the organisation and individual”, Turnley, W, and Feldman, D (2000). Equally, previous research suggests that failed or unmet expectations results in disappointments, while unfulfilled promises results in contract violation and may result in feelings of betrayal, anger and outrage, Ivan Robertson & Cary Cooper (2001), and feelings of resentment and mistrust, Turnley and Feldman, (2000).

Breach of psychological contract can also occur when there is a perception by employee that the organisation has failed to meet its obligations, Rousseau (1995)

The result of the research carried out by Turnley, W, and Feldman, (2000) where a total of eight hundred and four (804) managerial-level personnel participated revealed the detrimental effect and impact of psychological contract violation on three types of employee behaviour

examined- intention to quit, willingness to perform and engage in organisational citizenship behaviour and employees' neglect of their in-role job duties and responsibilities, & Cary Cooper (2001); Turnley and Feldman, (2000). Ivan Robertson and Cary Cooper (2001) believes that this strong violation may occur as a result of failure to keep a commitment in which injuries results or damages that the contract was designed to avoid occurs as a result of failure to keep a promise. Tyagi and Agrawal, (2010) states as follows "Psychological contract violation consists of various emotions resulting from the fact that expected outcomes did not eventuate (e.g., disappointment and frustration) and, at a deeper level, feelings of betrayal, anger, and bitterness due to broken promises (Morrison & Robinson 1997, Robinson & Morrison 2000)."

Recent works on psychological contract have drawn a distinction between psychological contract breach and psychological contract violation. It has been pointed out that breach does not necessarily lead to violation, although they are correlated, there are statistical evidence to buttress this distinction drawn, Tyagi, A, and Agrawal, R (2010) citing Morrison (2000). Reneging and incongruence have been identified by researchers as the two main causes of psychological contract violation, Rousseau (1995). Reneging is brought about by organisation deliberately or due to unforeseen circumstance breaks a promise it made to its employees'. On the other hand incongruence may occur as a result of different understanding between employer and employee as to what has been promised, Tyagi, A, and Agrawal, R (2010). This implies that incongruence is not associated with a deliberate act but occurs as a result of erroneous believe that one party has lived up to its commitment while in actual sense it has not, (misunderstanding as to promises made)

McCoy, and Elwood, (2009) posits that damaged or broken psychological contract poses a significant risk to business continuity especially "in times of extreme change and turbulence such as the current economic crisis". This means fulfilling the psychological contract will

ensure there is no breach with the attendant negative attitudinal behaviour associated with contract breach and violation, in the words of Tyagi and Agrawal, (2010) contract fulfilment is the opposite of contract breach; which invariably means that a fulfilled psychological contract indicates absence of contract breach.

In summing up the implications of contract violation, Maguire Heather (2003) acknowledges that the generality of literature suggests “that violations of the psychological contract are negatively related to trust, organisational citizenship behaviour, employee relational obligations and employees’ withdrawal behaviour, as well as intentions to quit and other disaffections (Robinson & Morrison 1993; Robinson & Rousseau 1994; Robinson et al. 1004; Guzzo et al 1994)”. While on the other hand, perceived breach may result in reduced job satisfaction, reduced organizational commitment and trust, William H. Turnley and Daniel C. Feldman (2000)

2.4 Types of Psychological Contract

Psychological contract is further broken into types and has many different conceptualizations according to Aiken & Watson (2012) cited in Walker, WJ,(2013) they suggest that psychological contract falls within the direct and indirect types whereby the ‘direct contract involves the employee and employer and the indirect contract involves the employees’ perception of the employer’s relationship with consumers.’ Rousseau (1998) cited in Ivan Robertson et al,(2001) sustains that employment contract indicates much more than simple economic forms of exchange-monetary, and goes ahead to draw attention to the relationship-

based agreements with pointers to commitment of parties to maintaining the employment relationship- staying together in form of continued employment.

Jackson, Elenkov, Wright & Davis (2012) cited in Walker, WJ,(2013) suggests the existence of three types of Psychological contracts, they alluded to three compartmentalisation namely, the relational contract, transactional and principled contracts. The principled psychological contract is more concerned with ideological terms. Rousseau DM (1995) argues for four types of psychological contracts namely, Transactional contracts, Transitional contracts, Relational contracts and balanced contracts.

Coyle-Shapiro et al (2008) posits that there are two underlying dimensions of psychological contract namely, transactional and relation, they cite an attempted categorization by researches using psychological contract items such as job security, interesting work, career prospects/promotions, pay, training and developmental opportunities, autonomy in jobs, in which they suggest that “Transactional contracts contains highly tangible exchanges that are economical in focus; the terms and conditions remain static” while relational contracts contain tangible and intangible exchanges; are open ended and the terms of the contract are dynamic”

Notwithstanding the above, Rousseau, DM (1995) and a vast majority of authors and researcher have stuck to the more common and widely used model types, which are relational and transactional psychological contracts. This forms our main focus for the purpose of this research, the widely used model- transactional and relational contracts.

2.5 Transactional Contract

Walker, WJ,(2013) citing Robinson, Kraatz & Rousseau (1994) defines Transactional contracts as “contracts that are primarily economic, relatively short-term in nature and concerns substantive issues such as pay, benefits and working hours.” Leaning in agreement, Ivan Robertson & Cary Cooper (2001, pg. 390) re-echoed that transactional psychological contract is largely about monetary benefits with ‘the attitude of money comes first’ stating that employees are more concerned with personal benefit with no thoughts of organisational citizenship behaviour. It is about terms of exchange quantified by monetary value, specific in nature with emphasis on material reward, it is usually expressed as ‘a fair day’s work for a fair day’s pay’ with focus on monetization exchanges, Rousseau, D.M (1995).

McDermott, et al (2013) expatiates further in his recent argument asserting that transactional contract is perhaps the most common type of contract which tends to be explicit in form, with money being a dominant feature.

Rousseau, D.M (1995, pg. 91) expands on the terms of transactional contract to include the following:

- Specific economic conditions (e.g., wage rate) as primary incentive
- Limited personal involvement in the job (e.g., working relatively few hours/low emotional investment)
- Closed-ended time frame (e.g., seasonal employment, 2, to 3 years on the job at most)
- Commitments limited to well-specified conditions (e.g., union contract)
- Little flexibility (change require renegotiation of contract)
- Use of existing skills (no development)
- Unambiguous term readily understood by outsiders

2.6 Relational Contract

Maguire Heather (2003) shares the same views as Rousseau, D.M (1995) in her assertion on relational contract and shares her deep insight of what relational contract is, she asserts that relational contract involves considerable investment by employees and employers characterised by loyalty, commitment and trust given by employee to employer in exchange for job security and training given in return or exchange employer. Recently Walker, (2013) brought to the surface/ cited Robinson, Kraatz & Rousseau (1994) definition where he defined relational contract as containing “none economic terms, tends to be open-ended in time periods and concerns more intangible issues, such as interpersonal treatment, job security and professional development.”. It sometimes spills-over or streams into an individual’s work and their personal life, Coyle-Shapiro et al (2008). The relational contract is also viewed as relating to the softer side of the employer and employee relationship and is usually geared towards gaining loyalty and commitment of the employees.

Rousseau, D.M (1995, pg. 92) listed the terms of relational terms to include the following:

- Emotional involvement as well as economic exchange (e.g., personal support, concern for family well- being)
- Whole person relations (e.g., growth, development)
- Open-ended time frames (i.e., indefinitely)
- Both written and unwritten terms (e.g., some terms emerge over time)
- Dynamic and subject to change during the life of the contract
- Pervasive conditions (e.g., affects personal and family life)
- Subjective and implicitly understood (i.e., conditions difficult for third party to understand)

To give authenticity to the two types of contract, Walker, WJ, (2013) relied on the works of Millward and Hopkins (1998) a study of workers carried out in United Kingdom which gives credence to the two compartmentalisation and framework of psychological contract consisting of transactional and relational contracts. Having almost same agreement with the numerous definitions, McDermott, et al (2013) describes relational contract as consisting of and being dominated by social and interpersonal concerns leading up to high-commitment employment.

Summing up on the two types of contract Walker, WJ, (2013) argues that transactional contract primarily involves economic exchange while relational contract relates to employees' professional, social and emotional needs.

From the foregoing, taking into consideration the terms of transactional and relational contracts as highlighted by Rousseau DM (1995), it appears that the old psychological contract, often referred to as traditional psychological contract falls well within the definition and description of relational contract in its many iterations, Rousseau DM (1995). While on the other hand, the contemporary psychological contract consists of elements of transactional contract, the volume of available literature equally reflects this. In support, Ivan Robertson & Cary Cooper (2001) argues that the “relational psychological contract can be regarded as being akin to the traditional working ‘partnership’ between employee and employer..., can engender feelings of affective involvement or attachment in the employee, and can commit the employer to providing more than purely remunerative support to the individual with investment such as training, personal and career development, and provision of job security.”

Notwithstanding the above categorization/types of psychological contracts, it has been noted and argued that some features of transactional contract may overlap with that of relational contract, e.g. An item of relational contract may be viewed as an item of transactional

contract. This has been described as ‘crossover of items’ for example training may be a relational or transactional feature/item, this has added to the on-going debate on classification of items/features into relational and transactional contract. This itself has led to considerable debate on the contents of transactional and relational components of psychological contract, Coyle-Shapiro et al (2008); Maguire Heather (2003). Although as noted by Coyle-Shapiro, O’Leary- Kelly and Schenk (2000) efforts have been made in drawing up propositions on an alternative approach to distinguish and operationalise features of relational and transactional contract using four dimensions: focus, time frame, inclusion and stability.

2.7 Table of Transactional and Relational Elements of Psychological Contract.

Transactional		Relational	
Employee contribution	Employee reward	Employee contribution	Employee reward
Giving advance notice of intention to leave.	Promotion and advancement.	Spending a minimum Of two years with the organisation.	Training.
Willingness to accept a transfer.	High pay.	Working extra hours.	Long-term job security.
Refusal to support organisation’s competitors.	Pay based on current level of performance	Volunteering to do non-required tasks	Career development.
			Sufficient power and responsibility.
			Support with personal problems

Protection of proprietary information			
Sufficient effort		Loyalty Commitment(affective) Commitment(continuance)	Opportunity for advancement. Training and development. Job security
Skills and knowledge	Good working conditions. Satisfactory relationship with work (job satisfaction)	Loyalty Enthusiasm Motivation	Sense of achievement Responsibility. Recognition
	Competent management. Opportunity to demonstrate competence		
Reasonable workload. Reasonable number of hours worked. Moderate level of	Appropriate level of autonomy. Affiliation with colleagues	Trust in management	Sense of belonging

stress			
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Adapted from **Maguire Heather (2003)**

2.8 Is Psychological Contract Important To An Organisation?

Psychological contract has been adjudged to be an important element in the relationship between employers and employees'. It plays a powerful role in determining and explaining work place behaviour and attitude, and has been largely projected as an important tool with which to make sense of and explore employment relationship, Tyagi, and Agrawal, (2010); Raulapati, Vipparthi, and Neti, (2010). Psychological contract has also been projected as a regulator of behaviour and at the same time, binds individuals and organisations together, Robinson, Kraatz, and Rousseau (1999) cited in Maguire Heather (2003).

Going by the recent argument put forward by chartered institute of personnel development, psychological contract serves as an interface between employer and employee as regards perceived mutual obligations towards each other, CIPD Factsheets (2013). This interface is considered crucial to the understanding of employer and employee relationship, Ivan Robertson and Cary Cooper (2001, pg. 384) are of the view that "this cooperative systems view of organisational life assumes that the interface between employer and employee cannot be taken for granted; it must be conceptualized, studied and more importantly, systematically managed"

Turnley and Feldman (2000) expand further on this by opining that when psychological contract is neglected or not systematically managed, it can lead to breach or violation. This

comes on the heels of mounting evidence that “Psychological contract violation damages the very foundation of the relationship that exists between the organisation and the individual.”

This violation produces more emotional and extreme outcomes, such as resentment and anger, Jackie McCoy and Alan Elwood (2009), emotional distress, feelings of betrayal and anger, Coyle-Shapiro et al (2008). In addition to all this findings, empirical evidence are suggestive of the fact that breach and violation of psychological contracts leads to reduced psychological well-being, Conway and Briner (2002) cited in Coyle-Shapiro et al (2008).

This goes to show that maintaining the psychological contract is an essential part of Positive Employee Relations. When the relationship between employee and employer is positive, the organisation stands to gain a lot in terms of optimal performance, Laurie J. Mullins (2010).

Consequent upon this, “where the psychological contract is positive, increased employee commitment and satisfaction will have a positive impact on the business performance.”

CIPD factsheets (2013).

Also Michael Armstrong (2012,pg. 409) quoting Guest (1996) posits that “A positive psychological contract is worth taking seriously because it is strongly linked to higher commitment to the organization, higher employee satisfaction and better employment relations”

Going by the above it is safe to assume that the state of organisations rest on the state of the psychological contract in place, the way and manner each employee view their contracts has been argued to be the driving force of their behaviour, Michael Muller-Camen (2008). Thus “how individual employees each view their contract is assumed to have a powerful effect on their behaviour.” Ivan Robertson and Cary Cooper (2001, pg. 388). This behaviour can be positive or negative. When negative, may result in behaviours that are damaging to organisational effectiveness which may lead to employees’ neglect of their in-role job duties

and employees' unwillingness to engage in organisational citizenship behaviours, Kheeran Dharmawardena (2009); Turnley, et al (2000).

Undoubtedly the absence of the above listed will have a detrimental effect on any organisation; this itself has gone a long way to show the importance of psychological contract to organisations. Jackie McCoy and Alan Elwood (2009) re-echoed the above by asserting that Psychological contract "poses a significant risk to business continuity and operational resilience if damaged or broken (...) in times of extreme change and turbulence (such as the current economic crisis) it may prove disastrous."

On the heels of the above the importance of organisations being abreast with the nature of its psychological contract cannot be over emphasised, summing this up, McDermott, et al (2013) posits that "the primary vehicle managers have for making firms successful is the psychological contracts they create with workers". Unmissably the weight of researches and literature are suggestive of the fact that psychological contract offers a useful framework for the management of employment relations, and organisations may pay dearly if they neglect and fail to consider the implications of psychological contract.

In summary, it is safe to suggest that positive psychological contract is essential for the continuous growth and harmonious relationship between employees and the organisation. No doubt there are strong links between contract beliefs and their fulfilment being positively related to job performance, employment duration and organisation citizenship behaviours, Maguire Heather (2003).

2.9 Contemporary nature of Psychological Contract

“The only thing constant in life is change”— François La Rochefoucauld

The above quote justifies the volume of literature suggesting changes in the nature of psychological contract, with majority arguing that employees’ and employers’ needs and expectations are different in significant respect both in content and scale from that of a decade ago, CIPD change Agenda (2005). Conversely Cooper, CL (1999) succinctly asserts that “the old adage that ‘change is here to stay’ epitomises the workplace over the last four decades (Cooper, 1998a)” noting that most of these changes are seen in the area of downsizing, cost reduction, delayering and outsourcing and job security.

Conversely it has become even clearer going by recent reviews of surveys, journals, internet, interviews and other investigative apparatus, that psychological contract has changed dramatically in recent years, Hiltrop, JM (1996). This view is equally shared by scholars and management experts as will be seen in this paper. Perhaps the most important of this drastic change is the inability of employers to continue to offer job security (traditional job-for-life) to employees’ but in place have offered developmental opportunities, also noticeable is the change in career responsibility being shifted back to employees’, Ivan Robertson and Cary Cooper (2001); Hiltrop, JM (1996). Lending their support to this, Tyagi and Agrawal, (2010) noted that “companies no longer assure lifetime employment to their employees; neither do employees profess complete loyalty to the employer”. McCoy and Elwood, (2009) and a few other researchers argue that the contemporary psychological contract seen in modern business practices differs from the traditional obligations, perceptions and expectations of the employees’

Although a few researches have suggested that in many ways the old psychological contract is still very much alive, CIPD Factsheets (2013); CIPD change Agenda (2005).Recent

research carried out by CIPD indicates that employees still want job security, still prepared to offer loyalty even though they might feel less committed to the organisation. The labour market data accessed by CIPD also indicated that there is only little reduction in the length of time employees stay on individual job, CIPD Factsheets (2013)

This above gives the impression that employees' still expect job security and are still prepared to offer loyalty in return, hence the basis for this research which is aimed at finding the present state and nature of psychological contract in Toy stores in Ireland.

However Michael Armstrong (2012, pg.409) believes that 'psychological contract evolves over time and can be multi-faceted and are not developed by a single transaction.' This seems to be in line with volumes of literature on psychological contract.

Jean M. Hiltrop (1996); Tyagi and Agrawal, (2010), suggest that Psychological contracts are dynamic, after formed they do not remain static; they constantly evolve through organisational experience. Expanding further Jean M. Hiltrop (1996) states that there is a new psychological contract but most organisations are buying only the half that suits them. Organisations "cannot offer job security, but at the same time they do not want to lose the traditional commitment and loyalty of their employees" In support of the above, Ivan Robertson and Cary Cooper (2001, pg.380) opines that it is increasingly becoming evident that there is a move-away from the traditional working relationship between employer and employee. Employees' are no longer assured of many factors that add up to "work- related psychological well-being such as job security, opportunity for promotion, status and increased salary". They argued that the changing context of employment relation being witnessed in work place from the 1990s has been occasioned by various economic, technological and sociological phenomena, which has resulted in the shift from old traditional contract to a new one.

Arguments have also pointed to the fact that as against the former practise, employees' are likely to be employed on fixed term rather than permanent contract, Kheeran Dharmawardena (2009); Ivan Robertson and Cary Cooper (2001)

Ivan Robertson and Cary Cooper (2001, pg.381) summed up their argument by opining that "Management experts are now predicting a shift from traditional working patterns to a core/complementary structure by the turn of the century." And our question is, Is that "turn of the century" here? The research questions are geared towards providing us with the answers as we progress with this study.

According to Laurie J Mullins (2010); Ivan Robertson and Cary Cooper (2001) the nature of psychological contract seems to be changing in both the direction of employer and employee with wide ranging implications for the workforce. Ivan Robertson and Cary Cooper (2001, pg.381) argues thus " the contractual norm is shifting increasingly towards the individual accepting long hours, more responsibility, a requirement for a broader range of skills and tolerance of change and role ambiguity, with the organisation providing returns of high pay, rewards for performance and, in the simplest terms, a job (Arnold,1996)" Going by the assertions of CIPD change Agenda (2013), the new deal is said to consist of offer by the employer of fair pay and fair treatment plus opportunities for training and development. The above changes have largely been attributed to the turbulent and unstable market situation witnessed from the 1990s till present and the impact of globalisation. These factors are said to be responsible for the demise of the traditional deal, CIPD Factsheets (2013). Reasoning along same line, Walker, WJ,(2013), puts forward the argument that the increased uncertainties and cost pressures are as a result of changes in the economy and technology, globalization and increased foreign competition over the past few decades have led to the speculated shifts in the relationship between employees' and employers.

While on the other hand, Rousseau (1995) posits that ‘psychological contracts can change without any formal effort to alter their terms,’ justifying his belief, Rousseau further opines that maturation process, personal development, aging and contract duration can happen naturally to cause internal changes referred to as ‘Contract drift’

Highlighting an important dimension noticeable in most of the arguments, Hiltrop (1996) noted, it would seem that the new deal on offer now is employability security as against job security. Adding to this, Maguire Heather (2003) suggests “employability has replaced the concept to job tenure”

Noteworthy is the arguments and suggestions that have shown that traditional psychological contracts is the much talked about relational contract consisting of same features while the “new deal” is known as transactional psychological contract. Both of which were discussed earlier in this paper. On the foot of the foregoing, it appears there is a shift from relational contracts to transactional contracts as has been argued.

However CIPD change Agenda (2005) questions the consistency of such findings based on the footnote of earlier survey carried out by CIPD and other major national survey in UK which indicated that many workers continue to put in extra man hour on a voluntary basis. But they were quick to acknowledge the fact their survey findings will most definitely not correspond precisely with the state of psychological contract in all organisations. That notwithstanding, majority of literatures acknowledge that the component of psychological contract seems to have shifted from relational contract to transactional contract, Walker, WJ, (2013).

However, Ivan Robertson & Cary Cooper (2001) noted the divergent views of Millward & Brewerton, (1999) where they argued that evidence from UK seems to point to an attributes

of both relational and transactional employment exchange relationship, conversely, it was suggested that same pattern was emerging in the US which they tagged as hybrid contract.

Ivan Robertson & Cary Cooper (2001, Pg. 423) findings seems to be in line with most recent research and literature, positing that psychological contract do change over time noting that there seems to be a shifts from a relational to a transactional nature and content'. See the table 2.1 for illustration of Old deal and new deal.

2.10 Table of Old deal/Traditional and New deal/Contemporary Psychological contract

OLD DEAL	NEW DEAL
Long-term security	No security
Fair pay for good performance	High pay for high performance
Structured, predictable employment scenario	Flexible and ambiguous employment scenario
Carer managed by organization	Career managed by individual
Time and effort rewarded	Performance/results expected
Income related to experience/status	Income related to the performance-performance related pay

Offered promotion prospects and supported in return for ‘going the extra mile’	Transactional attitudes ‘tit for tat’ mentality
Mutual trust and investment	Little trust, much cynicism

Adapted from Ivan Robertson & Cary Cooper (2001, pg.382)

2.11 Managing the Psychological Contract

Having looked at the importance of psychological contract, highlighting on the role it plays in employment relations which has been adjudged as an important role with which to make sense and explore employment relations and at the same time regulating the behaviour and creating bonds between individuals and organisations, Tyagi, A, and Agrawal, R (2010); Raulapati, Vipparthi, and Neti, (2010); Robinson, Kraatz, and Rousseau (1999) cited in Maguire Heather (2003). It naturally follows that exploring ways to manage psychological contract should follow especially coming on the foot that the success of any organisation depends of the psychological contract in place.

One of the critical challenges facing organisations today (toy stores inclusive) is how to manage the changing employer- employee relationship. Like everything else that are subject to change, the changes in psychological contract comes with it, threat to employers and erosions to employees’ inputs if not managed properly, Raulapati, Vipparthi and Neti (2010). “Understanding the implications and managing the psychological contract will present a good opportunity to examine the fundamental aspect of this employer- employee relationship,” Tyagi, and Agrawal (2010). The effects of a negative, breach or violation of psychological

contract have attracted considerable research and is well known to mostly lead to disenchantment, demotivation and resentful behaviour on the part of employees', Raulapati, Vipparthi and Neti (2010). Also Rousseau D.M (1995) argues that when employees receive what has been promised by the organisation, it lead to strengthened trust in employee-organisation relationship, hence the importance of managing the psychological contract.

It has been suggested that managing the psychological contract needs to begin before employees are hired. Organisations need to look into their interview process, contract negotiation, the orientation process and their publications as all these contributes towards the formation of employees' psychological contracts, Dharmawardena (2009). This is especially so as contract formation has been projected as starting from overt statement during the recruitment or/ organisational induction process, Rousseau DM (1995). Supporting the same notion, Walker WJ,(2013) opines that the terms of psychological contracts are "explicitly discussed in the early stages of employment relation.

This makes communication a key element and a very important factor in building a positive psychological contract as well as paying attention to the process of communication, Guest D. and Conway N (2002). Also failure to communicate has been listed as one of the causes of perceived breaches of the psychological contract, Lester and Kickul,(2001) cited in Dharmawardena (2009). It has been suggested that constant and continuous communication will lead to a realistic view of the actual expectation and obligations, managing and forming the right kind of psychological contract needed by organisation to help build resilience and navigate their way in this seemingly economic turbulence.

Guest D. and Conway N (2002), draws attention to three areas of communications highlighted by the following authors to enhance building a positive psychological contract- Robinson and Morrison (2000) touched on the importance of being upfront with the nature of

psychological contract in place during the process of recruitment, while Herriot and Pemberton (1997) and Stiles et al (1997) harped on the need for ongoing interaction between employee and employer and the need to avail of the performance appraisal process to clarify expectations in relation to job and personal issues such as workload, work-life balance, career prospects and training and development. From the analysis above, communicating the psychological contract in operation and having a positive psychological contract seems to be an avenue to maintain good employer-employee relations, Taylor Stephen (2011)

The use of multiple channels of communication has been highlighted as being important especially as “the process of communicating the psychological contract can be as high as its content” Guest D and Conway N. (2002)

The importance of psychological contract to employee and employer relationship cannot be overstated, it needs to be groomed and nourished in the right direction to have a good ripple effect on job performance, commitment and good attitudinal behaviour of employees.

“Where the psychological contract is positive, increased employee commitment and satisfaction will have a positive impact on business performance.” CIPD (2013)

The above seems to span the length and breadth of the applicability of communication tools in building a positive psychological contract.

Mullins,L J (2010) viewed the management of psychological contract from the angle of good people-management practice. He canvased that employing good people-management practice is the basis for a positive psychological contract; this same view was supported by CIPD (2012). Similarly Rousseau (1995) suggests that the design, implementation and tailoring of human resource practise and policies should reflect the needs of employees and in such a way to prevent psychological contract breach.

Although it may not always be possible to avoid breach of psychological contract, Tyagi and Agrawal, (2010) in touching on the importance of communication suggests that employers are likely to be forgiven by employees' when explanations of what has gone wrong is tendered and how they intend to deal with it, I.e., contract renegotiation. Also Hiltrop, JM (1996) suggests a sequence of renegotiations of the psychological contract which may require a major shift of management style to allow for role clarity, two way communication, decentralization and direct participation of employees' in decision making as against the traditional 'command and control'. In the same vain, Rousseau (1995); Raulapati, Vipparthi and Neti (2010), noted that it may not be possible to fulfil every promise made to employees' on the backdrop of the recent organisational changes occasioned by growing competitive pressures confronting organisations, they suggest the deployment of HRM practises could prevent breach of psychological contract from occurring.

3.0 Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction

Research is defined as “something that people undertake in order to find out things in a systematic way, thereby increasing their knowledge”, Mark Saunders, Philip Lewis and Adrian Thornhill (2009, Pg. 5). As noted most literature on research describe the research process as a multi-stage that should be followed in order to undertake and conclusively complete a research project, Mark Saunders et al (2009).

Methodology as regard research was equally defined as “the theory of how research should be undertaken”, Mark Saunders et al (2009, Pg. 3),by having some understanding of what

research methodology is will no doubt facilitate making informed choices about the research study being undertaken. In carry out a research, data is collected from a variety of different sources, pieced and assembled together in a well-defined documented way, it will also involve the listing of the sources of the data used as well as explanation of the methods used to collect the data, the limitations encountered and arguments for the meaningful results obtained, Mark Saunders, Philip Lewis and Adrian Thornhill (2009). All this were taken on board and applied in this research.

As part of this research explanation of the methods used to collect data, the background to this research will be set out in this chapter together with the methodology and techniques used in conducting the research, Justification and explanations regarding the choice of the method, sample selection, data collection and analysis used in arriving at the research findings will also be given.

Ethical considerations necessary to complete this research will also be given due consideration and described.

The various methods and techniques applicable in helping to meet the objectives of this research to enable a good understanding of the research topic were studied before making a choice on the most appropriate for this research.

3.2 Research Method

In reference to the term research method, the researcher includes and focuses on techniques and procedures which are used in obtaining and analysing data. Research methods generally

include questionnaires, observation and interviews as well as both quantitative (Statistical) and qualitative (non-statistical) analysis techniques from which an appropriate method is picked from.

The main import of this research is to embark on findings about the present nature of psychological contract in toy stores in Ireland, to find out if employees' and employers are in tune with expectations and obligation from each other. The importance of management being in tune with the present reality of psychological contract and how it can be managed effectively to produce a positive outcome for employees and employers within the toy store environment will also be looked into.

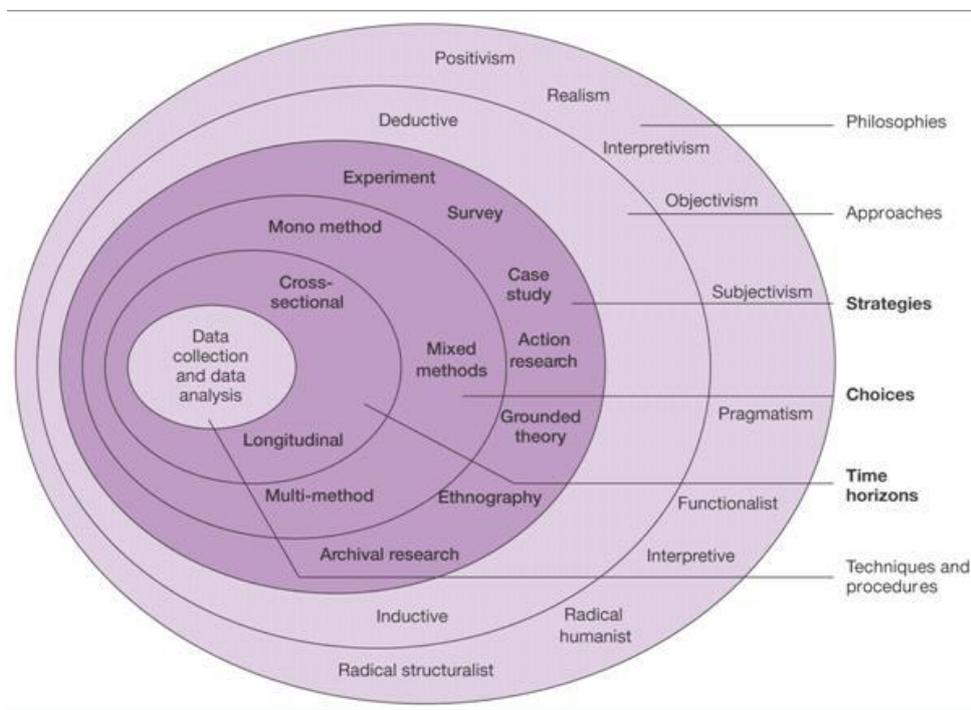
Six employees and 2 managers working in toy stores will be interviewed using the semi-structured method. This is deemed as appropriate sample for this research based on the fact that they work in the sector being researched and will be in the best position to answer questions directly related to their work.

Going by the volume of literature on psychological contract the breach of psychological contract seems to have dominated the volume of work. Very few researchers and scholars have delved into the area of 'nature of psychological contract' even though most hinted in their work that traditional psychological contract has been replaced by a new and contemporary one. This research is intended to explore what changes there are in employee-employer relation and the present nature of psychological contract in toy stores. To be able to do this, the researcher employs the following research design.

3.3 Research Design

The researcher will be guided by the interpretivism philosophy within an inductive approach using qualitative data through interviews (mono-method). This method is informed having noticed that majority of the research done on psychological contract adopted the quantitative approach and down played qualitative research. Also the complex nature of psychological contracting within an organisation has been highlighted by few studies to be more complex than is captured by survey research, Coyle-Shapiro et al (2008). Furthermore, the research method and design will be explained using the ‘research onion’, for the reason that it has proved to be good guide in understanding the various stages of this research process.

3.4 Diagram of the research onion



Adapted from Mark Saunders et al (pg. 108)

3.5 Research philosophy

In order to get an appropriate philosophy, approach and strategy to adopt, the various layers of the onion would have to be examined or peeled back in the context of the research topic and its objectives, Mark Saunders et al (2007). Following the layers of the onion in an ordered step of sequence helped the researcher in constructing an appropriate research design and strategy to meet a desired outcome.

According to Saunders et al (2007) the choice of administering questionnaires or conducting interviews belongs to the centre of research onion including the choice of data analysis technique. Also those important layers of these onions are to be peel before getting to the central point.

Going by Mark Saunders et al (2007, pg. 101 & 102) the first two of the onion's layer is known as research philosophy and research approach. This implies that the process of research starts with the research philosophy- "developing knowledge in a particular field" In other words this research philosophy "relates to the development of knowledge and the nature of that knowledge (...) the research philosophy you adopt contains important assumptions about the way in which you view the world" This is not to say that the philosophy, in part, will not be influenced by practical considerations that will be gotten from the experience of interviewees in the relevant sector. This is particularly so as the primary concern of this research is to generate meanings and gain insights into the manner in which people experience events or situations and how they are interpreted, Mark Saunders et al (2009)

There are different research philosophies, they include, positivism, realism, interpretivism, objectivism, subjectivism and pragmatism, Saunders et al (2009). To conduct this research, interpretivism philosophy is adopted for the reason that it aids in understanding and making sense of the business world around us by understanding the world from the point of view of

those directly affected. To do this, research has to be conducted among people rather than objects to understand the difference between humans because business situations are complex and also unique, Mark Saunders et al (2007).

Backing the above submission Mark Saunders et al (2007, pg. 107) states that “some would argue that an interpretivist perspective is highly appropriate in the case of business and management research, particularly in such fields as organisational behaviour, marketing and human resource management. Not only are business situations complex, they are also unique”

From the above, the use of interpretivism philosophy is most appropriate for this research and would help in throwing better light at the present nature of psychological contract and to also find out if employees’ and employers are in tune with expectations from each other.

3.6 Research approach

The next layer in the Research onion is called research approach. The research approach is made up of inductive and deductive, these two approaches are widely used in research fields. The inductive approach is best suited for this research objective; it is used because it helps clarify assumptions and allows for a more flexible structure than the deductive approach. In addition, the adopted inductive approach focussed on allowing the data and themes emerge from the interview stage by ensuring that participants understood the objective of the research and overall concept. This inductive approach involves collecting data and developing a theory from the analysis of such data, Mark Saunders et al (2007). It also helps in getting direct and in-depth insight of the employees’ and employers’ expectation of and obligation

towards each other by way of in-depth interviews of one manager and six employees of two different toy stores in Ireland

More so this inductive approach is most suited because it most likely allows for better understanding of the “context in which such events are/were taking place. Therefore the study of a small sample of subjects might be more appropriated than a large number as with the deductive approach” To achieve this one managers and group of six employees’ of different stores, all employed within the toy store sector are interviewed to get an insight into their working relationship. And understand ‘whys’ in the happening of events rather than being able to describe only what is happening, for these reasons Saunders (2007, Pg. 119); Mark Saunders et al (2009, Pg. 126) asserts that “it may be more appropriate to undertake your research inductively rather than deductively”. Further to the above, inductive approach will allow for flexibility in getting to know the ‘whys’ surrounding contemporary psychological contracts, this will enable good insight into the present reciprocity nature of psychological contract in toy stores.

3.7 Research strategy

The research strategy adopted ensures that the research questions are answered clearly while at the same time ensuring that the research objective is met. The choice of research strategy is guided by the research questions and objectives, ‘the extent of existing knowledge, the amount of time and other available resources’ Mark Saunders et al (2009, Pg. 141). Since inductive approach has been chosen for this research the **Grounded theory** will be best

suited to complement it as against such other strategies as experiment, survey, case study action research, ethnography and archival research, Mark Saunders et al (2007)

According to Goulding (2002) cited in Mark Saunders et al (2007, pg.142) “A grounded theory strategy is particularly helpful for research to predict and explain behaviour” In addition Mark Saunders et al (2007) opines that a “grounded theory strategy can be used to explore a wide range of business and management issue (...) data collection starts without the formation of an initial theoretical framework. Theory is developed from data generated by a series of observations.”

This grounded theory strategy is most appropriate for this research for the reasons that no theory has been formed based on the research objective which is geared towards finding the nature of psychological contract in toy stores and if employees’ and employers are in tune with expectation and obligation of each other. This grounded theory is also in line with this research purpose which is exploratory study aimed at finding out the state of contemporary psychological contract. According to Mark Saunders et al (2007, pg.131) “An exploratory study is a valuable means of finding out ‘what is happening; to seek new insights; to ask questions and to assess phenomena in a new light’ (Robson, 2002:59)”. Also, in keeping with methodological terms of the purpose of this research, the grounded theory appropriately follows from the inductive approach and interpretivism philosophy in derivation.

Although the grounded theory approach does not lend itself exclusively to qualitative method, it was nevertheless considered appropriate for this research for the reasons that it allowed the researcher explain how the participants came about their answers and context in which words were used, in addition it is often linked to the best example of the inductive approach Mark Saunders et al (2007)

3.8 Research Choice

The **mono-method choice** is taken on board here. This research choice is chosen based on the nature of data collection- conducting an in-depth interview of one toy store managers based in Dublin Ireland whose duties include recruitment and selection, disciplinary work, supervisory role including managerial duties on the one hand and six toy store employees based in Dublin Ireland on the other hand. This choice enabled the researcher get answers to the research questions and adequate insights on what the mutual expectations and obligations of employees and employers were. In so doing we availed of the experience and opinions of the participants which is vital to the success of this research.

According to Mark Saunders et al (2007, pg. 145) “In choosing your research methods you will therefore either use a single data collection technique and corresponding analysis procedures (mono-method).” In this case an in-depth interview was employed with qualitative data analysis procedures.

Predetermined questions fashioned around the research objectives was used for the sole reason of receiving detailed and relevant answers. To facilitate this, the interview format was semi-structured allowing for additional questions determinant on responses gotten. These research questions were adapted and modified from Denise M. Rousseau’s PCI 2008, which suggested relevant questions on employees’ and employer obligations, which was used as a guide to help answer the research questions.

To get an in-depth and informed outcome for this research, it would seem that interviews are the necessary data collection tool to understanding the contemporary reciprocity and exchange relationship between employees and employers in toy stores and make findings regarding the employees’ and employers’ knowledge of obligation expected of each other.

3.9 Time Horizon

It has been suggested that the important question to look at in any research is the timing within which to complete a research, here the research questions/ objectives plays a critical role in timing of any research. The **cross sectional** time horizon was considered and used in this research because it is not focused on event over a long period- it has a specified time period to be finished and handed-in. As with most research projects undertaken for academic courses are constrained by time, Saunders et al (2007). This invariably means that the research on nature of psychological contract in toy stores will be carried out within a short time frame, which entails data collection and analysis within a short specified period of time. This seems to be in line with Saunders et al (2007, pg.148) definition of cross-sectional studies as “the study of a particular phenomenon (or phenomena) at a particular time”.

3.10 Research interviews

In considering what will be most beneficial in eliciting findings in the context of the research objective, the researcher employed the interview techniques. The choice of qualitative method was the preferred choice because it allows for first-hand data, based on the experience of those working within the context and have experienced or currently experiencing it. In this case, information about the present state of psychological contract in toy stores by way of an in-depth interview of one managers and six employees of the toy store sector, comprising of 3 males and 3 females.

According Saunders et al (2007, pg.470) “qualitative data refers to all non-numeric data or data that have not been quantified and can be a product of all research strategies (section 5.3). It can range from a sort list of responses to open-ended questions in an online questionnaire to more complex data such as transcripts of in-depth interviews or entire policy documents.” The primary data collection tool will be by way of an in-depth interview, this interview was audio- recorded using the record feature of the researcher’s phone and a digital audio recorder as a back-up, combined with note taking by the interviewer to ensure data is not lost (noting key points). The researcher also printed the questions and handed them to participants at the commencement of the interview to ensure there was no communication barrier due to different accents and intonation.

This data tool was chosen because the researcher adjudged it as being the most beneficial and useful in getting valuable answers to the research questions which has in turn led to the achievement of the research objective – nature of psychological contract in toy stores in Ireland. This made it imperative that new data was collected by way of semi-structured, in-depth interview of those who are parties to the employee/employer relationship. Fisher Colin (2004) argues that interviews are the most commonly deployed method in Master’s level research (such as this study) into businesses and organisations. Notwithstanding the above, secondary data such as literature on psychological contract, newspaper articles and research papers was equally assessed and deemed as useful sources. The primary data served to give us a fresh and contemporary insight while the secondary data provided useful information on psychological contract in general which proved useful in the analysis stage of this research and helped in appropriately categorising the present nature of psychological contract in toy stores in Ireland.

3.11 Sampling Method

The sampling method deployed for this research was the Non-probability sample. The reason for this method is owing to the impossibility of collecting all data from all toy stores' population because of limitations in time, budget and access which left the researcher with the limited choice of selecting a sample. In selecting a sample, the population to be in the sample was defined and narrowed to the relevant sector – toy store sector. According to Mark Saunders et al (2007, pg. 205 & 206) “In sampling, the term ‘population’ is not used in its normal sense, as the full set of cases need not necessarily be people” this implies that objects can equally be referred to as population within the contexts of sampling but this was not our case as our population were people working in toy stores. Going by this research one manager and six toy store employees consisting of three males and three females all working in toy stores and all in Dublin were interviewed for the purpose of getting a deep insight into the state of psychological contract and understand what their obligations are to each other. In total seven people from the retail sector in Dublin were interviewed with end result of achieving the research aim. Harping on this Mark Saunders et al (2007, pg.226) leans in support of the researcher's chosen method by stating “To answer your question (s) and to meet your research objectives you may need to undertake an in-depth study that focuses on a small, perhaps one, case selected for a particular purpose. This sample would provide you with an information-rich case study in which you explore your research question.”

3.12 Convenience Sampling

Regarding the sampling technique used for this research, the **convenience sampling** was used based on the fact of ease at obtaining such sample and it was most appropriate due to the time limitation of this research. It has been acknowledged that this sampling technique is widely used and prone to bias and influences beyond the control of the researcher because “often the sample is intended to represent the total population (...) meaning that subsequent generalisations are likely to be at best flawed “Mark Saunders et al (2007, pg. 234). This bias might not be applicable to this research because it seeks to make findings on the present nature of psychological contract within people working in toy store Dublin and not intended to generalize on the contemporary nature of psychological contract in all organisations nor the total workforce of Dublin.

In terms of practical efforts required to obtain/ access primary data, since it is an inductive research, prospective interviewees were contacted beforehand to confirm willingness and availability. A tentative date was agreed and left pending a further confirmation nearer to the agreed date; this seems to be in line with the reasoning of Mark Saunders et al, (2009).

Convenient dates, time and venue were formally agreed and interviews held. The researcher took into account the difficulty and limitations that may be encountered on the part of the interviewees, which included changing their minds about being interviewed for fear of backlash from the organisation if sensitive information were to be revealed and prepared for eventualities by trying to avoid this situation, to stop this from happening the researcher assured the participant upfront of confidentiality and anonymity, more information was provided on reasons behind the research and giving information of the primary recipients and they were assured it was purely an academic research. Another difficulty envisaged was

reluctance of interviewees depending on how busy they would be. Considering the timing of the research, the summer months are usually a busy period for sales in toy store since schools were on summer vacation. To counter this, the researcher incorporated the value of their personal time, cooperation, contributions, appreciation and gratitude when first and subsequent contacts were made.

Personal biases of the researcher that might interfere with this research were considered. The disposition of the researcher about the research bearing in mind that the researcher works in a toy store and may have personal opinions on expectations as regards reciprocity. To avoid this bias this researcher will remained objective all through the interviews, kept personal opinions away and did not let it interfere with this research.

3.13 Data Collection, Editing, Coding and Analysis

Still on the research onion, the final step is described as technique and procedures which deals with data collection and analysis. It is important to state here that the goal for data collection is to essentially capture quality and relevant evidence which can be translated into rich data analysis. This rich data analysis will in turn allow for the building of a convincing and credible answer to questions that has been posed in the course of a research. The data collection tool was an in-depth interview through the qualitative method, which proved to be very useful in this research. The grounded theory method was used in analysing the data emanating from this research to get at the emergent theory, while doing this the researcher acknowledges the complex process associated with the challenge of working through large volumes of research evidence as pointed out by Mark Saunders et al (2009) while at the same

time knowing that the emergent theory being worked on will shape the conclusions of this research work.

Relying on the recordings, notes taken during the interview and transcripts of the data collected, the researcher proceeded to interpret the meaning and significance of the data that had emerged within the research topic by coding. By repeatedly listening to the interview recordings and transcribing same while coding, the researcher was able to fully understand and develop codes. This in turn led to emergent themes as discussed in the findings and discussion section of this study. In considering the techniques and procedures employed in this study, the researcher is satisfied that the primary objectives were achieved by this process of coding and analysis.

3.14 Ethical Issues and Procedures

According to Saunders (2009, pg. 202) “Research ethics refer to the appropriateness of your behaviour in relation to the rights of those who become the subject of your work or are affected by the work”. In line with Saunders’ suggestions, all best practice was applied throughout this research and interview process to the best capability of the researcher. All participants were assured of confidentiality and anonymity upfront before, and during the interview stage. This was done by means of an informed consent form (**Appendix 1**), a verbalised assurance was given to all participants prior to the start of each interview that information gotten would be handled confidentially and used for only purposes within the scope of the research. The researcher followed through with promise made by ensuring that

the verbatim transcript which doubles as authenticity of the interviews was submitted only to the dissertation supervisor and not included for public consumption.

On ethical implications and considerations, the researcher factored into consideration that the topic of this research may turn out to be a sensitive one as participant might in the process of answering the questions recall incidence of psychological contracts breach, the implications could result in temporary negative attitude towards the organisation. The researcher tried to avoid this by this by clearly explaining what the research was all about- purely for academic purpose aimed at disputing or backing up theories on nature of employment relations/ psychological contract.

On ethical consideration, all the rights of the participants were observed, this included informing them that they retain the rights not to take part, rights to withdraw as participants and rights not to answers questions they don't want to. Also care was taken to ensure participants were not asked to participate in anything that will cause harm or intrude on their privacy, Mark Saunders (2009).

Added to the above, DBS ethical guidelines on research and laws guiding data collection, storage and processing were all observed. This includes strictly using the data for the purpose it was collected, not transferring such data to a third party without prior permission from the participants.

Care was taken not to plagiarise by employing Harvard referencing system for all secondary research data with primary data carefully attributed to originating source as enclosed the transcript sent out to dissertation supervisor.

3.15 Research Plans

The researcher got briefing from project supervisor confirming that the research could go ahead from middle of May 2014. Once the confirmation was gotten, researcher embarked on searching for more secondary data after the first meeting with the supervisor. The researcher was able to complete the study within the allocated time as specified by Dublin Business School

Researchers also took on board advice and guidance from supervisor to ensure that the research was valid while adhering to ethical standards.

3.16 Time Allocation

Activity-	Start Date	Finish Date
Searching for secondary data	Mid May 2014	End of May 2014
Reading secondary data	Mid May 2014	End of May 2014
Creating Data collection instruments	June 2014	June 2014
Analysing primary data	June 2014	June 2014
Writing the early drafts	July 2014	July 2014
Analysing comments on drafts by supervisor	July 2014	July 2014
Revisions of drafts	August 2014	August 2014
Printing and binding	August 2014	August 2014

4.0 Findings and Discussion

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the grounded theory process is used in examining and discussing the findings and emergent themes within the context of the research objective. At the commencement of every interview, a printed copy of the questions was given to participants to ensure smooth communication and avoid misunderstanding due to accent differentiation.

In view of keeping in line with best practice, ethical and confidentiality that was guaranteed participants, the details of the participants, transcript together with the duration of interviews, making up the interview schedule were submitted independently to the dissertation supervisor. Furthermore, the seven interviewees will hereafter be referred to as Participants A, B, C, D, E, F and G

The vast arrays of literature and research overwhelmingly argues that the nature of psychological contract has seen a few changes over the last decades, some of those argument based their assertion on the fact that change is constant and employees and employers' relationship is bound to evolve and change with time, Cooper, CL (1999); Michael Armstrong (2012).Some others have tried to justify and pinpoint reasons for these changes by putting forward the argument that these changes are as a result of the turbulent economic climate, globalisation and technological changes, Ivan Robertson and Cary Cooper (2001). In all the arguments, the bottom lines seems to be the agreement that nature of psychological contract has change or is changing, change is the recurring decimal which has led to purpose and objective of this research which includes the primary purpose of unearthing the present nature of psychological contract in toy stores in Ireland.

The purpose and objective of this research is to find out the present nature of psychological contract in toy stores in Ireland based on a sample of individuals working in various capacities within the toys store sector, comprising of six employees and one manager from two of the most popular toy stores in Ireland.

In the course of this research, we discovered that the term psychological contract is relatively unknown in the vocabulary of employer-employee dealings, the term did not seem to be widely in use within the toy store sector, but on closer examination the elements and central components of psychological contract appears to be evident in management understanding and handling of employment relationship. This is seen and addressed in relation to and will be seen from later analysis of primary materials (semi-structured interviews). **Financial reward, advancement opportunities, commitment and loyalty and mutual respect** are as among the foremost themes that emerged from the many opinions, perspectives and interpretations emanating for the interview process.

4.2 Emergent Themes

In meeting with the objective of this research, the qualitative research method via semi-structured interview process proved to be highly valuable. The interviewees chosen to participate in this study contributed greatly to the in-depth insights required to understand the present nature of psychological contract in toy stores. They vastly proved to have rich experience within their respective toy stores having all worked for a period ranging between two to five years.

Most importantly no two participants put forward exactly the same answers to the research questions but a number of common themes were easy to identify and pinpointed, which led to further probing, exploration and discussions. These emergent themes have been earlier discussed in details in the Literature Review Chapter.

The emergent themes of this research study are the concept of financial reward, advancement opportunities, commitment and loyalty and mutual respect with several contributors furnishing various insights to the concept and the role it plays in the employment relations. These emergent themes are all valuable and individual topics in their own rights, observably; the common theme running through them is mutual expectations. It is no secret that psychological contract has in recent past received a lot of attention theoretically, research wise and currently a widely researched topic. In as much as it can mean different things to different people due to the fact of its subjective nature based on the perception and perspective of parties to the contract which may differ in details and meanings. It is still a great dictate of employment relations and how people act and behave within an organisation.

Taking into consideration the reoccurring themes in the compartmentalisation of psychological contract (transactional and relational elements of the contract) the researcher uses the key elements in investigating and making findings on the research question, conclusions were also based on the findings. The keys elements/themes are as follows and taken from Rousseau (1995, Pg. 91-97) itemisation of Relational and Transactional contracts and modified to suit the research purpose- Monetary expectations/ Financial Rewards, Job security, Training and development and commitment and loyalty. All the participants were actively encouraged to express their views on all the questions asked within the context of psychological contract in their respective toy stores with a view of getting answers to the items listed. The strongest themes to emerge will be delved into below.

4.3 Monetary expectations/ financial rewards

One of the over-riding reasons for working in the toy store that emerged from the interview process is the concept of monetary expectations/ financial rewards. All the participants with the exception of one, without hesitation intimated that financial reward was a big factor in their career life. **Participant C** who may not necessarily be seen as the exception stated he liked what he did for a job and enjoyed his job. When asked the reason, not unsurprising he responded that he liked his employment contract at the moment and believes there are opportunities to move up (advancement opportunity). His response seemed a bit confusing as to if he really liked the job for the job or he liked it because of his contract and advancement opportunities.

Monetary inducement seems to be at the core of transactional contract, going by Rousseau (1995, Pg.91) it is “exemplified by a fair day’s work for a fair day’s pay – focusing on short-term and monetizable exchanges.” This is equally reflective on the volume to academic literatures on psychological contract. Money and personal benefits seems to be the main concern of employees and tied to whatever service they render to their organisation, Ivan Robertson and Cary Cooper (2001); Rousseau (1995). To understand where these stand in the scheme of affairs in the work place, participants were asked some question, most of their responses perfectly fitted into the arguments above- monetary rewards and or personal benefits. When asked if they would leave their organisation without second thoughts if they were presented with the opportunity, six out of the seven participants answered in the affirmative. When prodded further, they gave their reasons as money being the major factor. From their various answers, money seems to be a significant and huge factor in why they are

in the toy store and also the reason why they would leave if they get a better offer of monetary compensation elsewhere. To better understand this, **Participant D** responded thus, “Yes, I will leave without a second thought if I get better offer of money elsewhere, at the moment, I’m doing a supervisory role but actually not getting paid for a supervisory role. So if the opportunity arose to do this job at another place with the title for more pay, yes I will 100%”. Interestingly and similarly **Participant F** shared the same line of thought with his words as follows, “Yes I would leave my current company if the right circumstance presented itself. By the right circumstance I mean if I get a better pay and better working condition”. From all indications going by the responses of participants to questions money seems to play a prominent role as to why they render the services they do. This is further demonstrated when asked if they viewed themselves as having no obligation to remain with their organisation, ordinarily this question if answered in the negative would bring a relational twist but it was mostly answered in the affirmative by four out of the six participants the question was put to, stated that they owed the organisation no obligation to remain if better opportunity presented itself elsewhere, here again money being the motivational factor for working in the toy store, to cap this **Participant D** caps it by saying “ I don’t have any special attachment to this job” perhaps other than the financial rewards he anticipates after a hard day’s job. On the other hand two out of the six participants the question was put to viewed themselves as having an obligations to remain with their organisation on grounds of loyalty because the organisation have been good to them.

Concern for Self-interest is also another noticeable dimension in the responses from participants- personal benefits that should accrue to them as one of the determinant of why they are working in the toy store. When asked if they have adjusted to the changing performance demands due to the business necessity, most of the participants agreed that they have had to learn new pitching skills to improve and meet their increasing sales targets, made

adjustment to their work hours to incorporate flexibility. Four of the Participants took on new roles with attendant training to accommodate the changes their new manager's made to their job descriptions and add to their job enrichment, they expected to be paid more and fairly for the extra responsibility stating that all these were taken on, not because of loyalty and love for the organisation but primarily because they want to keep their jobs and maybe get paid extra.

Hiltrop Jean M,(1996) going by his findings states that the nature of psychological contract is changing whereby "responsibility for career management is being shifted back to each employee" and used the word personal accountability as one of the many changes being witnessed which tilts towards transactional contract. He further argued that people are expected to be flexible to take on new skills to enhance their employability. This view was re-echoed by Ivan Robertson and Cary Cooper (2001, Pg. 382) where 'career management by individual' was highlighted as one of the new deals as against the old deal of career managed by organisation. As earlier stated, arguments have been advanced in favour of the old deal being relational contracts while the new deal is transactional contract, Rousseau (1995). This invariable means that under the transactional contracts employees are seen to be actively seeking for developmental opportunities to advance their career and/or employability security, Maguire Heather (2003). These views were further reflected and supported by the answers participants of this interview gave. When asked if they do seek developmental opportunities that enhance value to their employer and if they were building skills to increase their future employment opportunities elsewhere, all the six participants asked broadly answered in the affirmative except for one, who answered in the negative about building skills to enhance her future employment elsewhere and gave the reason that her present job in the toy store is her last job because she was too old to start looking for job elsewhere and viewed the present job as her retirement job. Others were happy to discuss the skills they had

acquired both in and off the job to help their employability skills, they ranged from, till training, doing up the work rotas, working under pressure, learning new pitching skills and carrying out some supervisory works. They were hoping that these skills will help their present jobs and increase their chances of other employment opportunities.

Participant D elaborated thus, “Yes, I am building skills to help develop myself for any where I go to.” When asked to elaborate he has this to say and openly admitted, “I have learnt how to use the computer to manage rosters, I have also learnt how to do the target spreadsheet for figures and store targets as well and managing people and working under pressure. All these will help me towards better employment opportunities elsewhere.”

Although some one of the participants when asked if she sought developmental opportunities in her organisation claimed that her organisation did not have developmental opportunities that would enhance her value to her employers, on further probing with other questions she seemed to understand the question better and stated she has undergone till training to enhance her value and increased her productivity level to her employers. However **Participant F** gave a different twist by further validating the transactional element of psychological contract bordering on employees being only interested in personal gains or benefits as put forward by Ivan Robertson and Cary Cooper (2001). In response to the question on if he was building skills to increase his future employment opportunities elsewhere “I focus all of my brain and energy to developing my own skills for business and to work for myself, which I currently do. I also try to add to my skill set every month and plan on starting a program of accredited continuous professional development for each year. I did actively seek for development opportunities in the past, which I thankfully got, other than that I believe I have already learnt the skills I might need from here.” All the participants clearly expressed that they were in their employment for the monetary benefit; this seems to falls within the categorisation of transactional contract as suggested by psychological contract literature.

4.4 Job Security

The concept of job for life has been a topic of interest since the early '90s which saw the rise in discuss of work related psychological well-being of employees. It has gone on to be one of the most theorised concepts of the traditional sometimes referred to as 'old and dead' aspect of psychological contract, Rousseau (1995). Conversely it is now synonymous with and has dominated the length and breadth of traditional employment relation which has essentially been branded in modern times as the relational contract, Ivan Robertson and Cary Cooper (2001, Pg. 390) states that "the relational psychological contract can be regarded as being akin to the traditional working 'partnership' between employee and employer." Rousseau, (1995, Pg. 110) also alluded but added a slightly different twist that purely relational contract is most likely to be the 'dead old psychological contract' Not surprisingly Job security, sometimes referred to as job for life has received its fair share of theoretical attention and research studies. Scholars have since put forward arguments that it is an important factor in differentiating between transactional and relational contracts. Rousseau, a leading author and an authority on employment relation especially on psychological contract opine when referring to relationship duration of career that "how long the relationship is meant to last typically differentiates contracts that are largely transactional from more relational ones." Contemporary literatures on psychological contract project the same notion with several listing job security as a distinguishing element to differentiate between relational contract and transactional contract.

Coming on the foot of the above, answers to questions framed around job security/ job for life or intended duration of employee careers in toy store will go a long way to determine the nature of psychological contract in toy stores as well as largely contribute to the research

findings. To aid our findings on the research topic, participants were asked if they had plans of remaining with the organisation indefinitely, all the participants except for one, whom the questions were put to clearly expressed that they did not see themselves staying longer than necessary in their organisation. They had no plans to stay on if a better paying job came along.

Participant C whom all along did not loosen up or seemed to fear a backlash perhaps not trusting that the information was going to be handled confidentially gave a rather innocuous answer, he talked about not knowing if he would be in the organisation for the next ten to twenty years.

Participant B was fairly certain she would remain in the organisation for long and has planned to retire there. When probed further, she reasoned that she had limited or no job opportunities if she left the store that no one would employ her due to her age. **Participant B** responded as follows “Absolutely, I don’t see myself returning to the job market because of my age. I don’t think anyone will be willing to employ me. I’m nearing my retirement...it is my retirement job” Her response might be due to the fact that she feels that without certain types of market skills she would be unemployable elsewhere. However the rest of the participants were adamant they were in the job for a short term to get paid with a view of moving on the minute they get a better paying job, interestingly the participants have spent between two to five years individually working for their toy stores. While their responses borders on transactional type of contract, the number of employees working years in their respective toy stores contrasts with **Maguire Heather (2003)** itemization of Relational contract element where it alludes that employees get rewarded with long-term job security if and when they work a minimum of two years with their organisations. **Maguire’s** itemization does not fit into the scenario as although the employees have been in their respective organisation for minimum period of two years; employees stated they were not planning on

remaining long term but only there pending the emergence of a better paying job. To further confirm this, one of the managers interviewed- **Participant G** made mention that they have more part-time employees than full time; he acknowledges that “typically part-time staff have a higher turnover rate than permanent staff. Obviously because they are in college, is not their main job, they are focused on new career at some stage.” This again seemingly indicates the presence of transactional type of contract in the toy stores.

4.5 Training and Development

Up until now, there is no general consensus as to the itemization of training and development. Ivan Robertson and Cary Cooper (2001) categorized it under relational contract with some other authors have leaning in support of this itemization among whom is Maguire Heather (2003) who puts forward arguments in favour of and categorised it as falling within the relational contract. More recently most scholars have asserted that training overlaps between transactional and relational contract, meaning it could fit as an item of either Transactional or relational depending on the context operationalizing it. Coyle-Shapiro et al (2008) describes it as a “cross- over item”, which implies that it can either be an element of transactional or relational contract.

Although it has been canvassed that training overlaps with transactional and relational contract, on a closer scrutiny, it is discovered that the supposed training in toy stores tilts a great deal towards transactional contract as will be seen from participants’ responses. In the course of the interview there was an overwhelming agreement that aside from the financial compensation, training and advancement opportunity was a major factor for employees.

Bearing in mind the arguments of Coyle-Shapiro et al (2008) which argues that the context in which the training and development took place should play a role in determining its categorization, following from this, it is safe to categorise the training and development in toy stores as fitting within the transactional contract. The chief reason being that participants saw it through the lens of benefits employers must offer for them to remain in the organisation. In addition to this **Participant G** stated that as part of the measures to motivate their employees, they have in place yearly reviews and appraisals to pinpoint areas they find challenging and channel appropriate training to help improve their performances. He also stated that the reviews also avail employees the opportunity to indicate and get help in areas they will like to be trained and developed in before the follow up review. He was also quick to point out that “but we would not go out of our way to train people and prepare them to leave our store. We will always want people to progress and get better at their jobs because it makes them more valuable to us and themselves.”

Participant C hinted that the reason why he was still in the organisation was because of the chances open to him to train and develop which he feels he might not get elsewhere.

Participant F also hinted in the course of the interview that he was ready to move on (try out another employment) having gained enough training from his organisation, he stated as follows “I did seek such developmental opportunities in the past and I feel there is nothing more to learn as I have been now being given the added responsibility of training new managers and new entrants for no extra pay.” Further along the interview, **Participant F** re-emphasised his intent on leaving the organisation the minute he gets the chance in the following words “I did actively seek for development opportunities in the past, which I thankfully got, other than that I believe I have already learnt the skills I might need from here.”

Participant D unequivocally stated that he would only remain in the toy store as long as he is getting the opportunity to develop himself, when asked to cite examples of the training or skills he had gotten already he mentioned he had learnt how to use the computer to manage rosters (doing up the work schedule of colleagues), learnt how to do the target spreadsheet for figures and store targets as well learnt how to manage the team of five people he heads and how to work under pressure, which he reckons will position him for better employment. All the above responses from participants appear to have a transactional tone to it and very much aligns with Hiltrop (1996); Maguire Heather (2003) assertion on the new turn of events which has seen employees' availing themselves of training and developmental opportunities in order to remain employable within and outside their organisations. These training and development which includes job enrichment, they believe will give them desired employability security to help in securing their futures.

4.6 Commitment and loyalty

Just as monetary expectations/financial reward summed as monetization exchanges is largely seen as the core element of transactional contracts so is commitment and loyalty core to traditional employment relation with employees' "offering loyalty, conformity, commitment and trust to the employing organisation in return for job security, promotional prospects..." Ivan Robertson and Cary Cooper (2001, Pg. 381). This traditional employment relation is commonly referred to as relational contract, Rousseau (1995). It has been vigorously canvassed that commitment and loyalty characterises the relational aspect of psychological contract, which entails the exchange of loyalty and commitment by the employee in return for

job security from the employing organisation, the answer to questions bordering on loyalty will more than likely help proffer answers to the objective of this research.

To examine the place of commitment and loyalty in the toy stores, most of the questions were framed in such a way that answers to them will help determine if the nature of psychological contract in toy stores is transactional or relational. All through the course of the interview participants showed and indicated little commitment and loyalty to their respective toy stores by vocalising financial and personal reasons for working in the toy store. Although most of the participants remained adamant that they were committed to their jobs only to the extent that what was worth doing was worth doing well which they attributed as their work ethics, personal belief and moral thinking. They gave the impression that their commitment is not as a result of attachment to the toy store but to doing a good job based on self-conviction.

The following are responses of participants when asked if they perform the bare minimum task required to keep your jobs. **Participant A**, responded thus “I do more, for the simple reason that I will be bored down my tree, I don’t believe in just doing the bare minimum and just getting away, It all about keeping myself busy. If there is work to be done, I just do it rather than standing around to talk to people” All the participants believe in achieving a hundred percent success in what they do. **Participant D** summarises and puts it succinctly as follows “I do more work than is required of me. I’m a bit of perfectionist so whenever I do something I have to do it well. I will go the extra. I have stayed behind after work to help events team clean up after parties, moving and tidying stuff. I have helped out my colleagues complete their tasks, if I was just going to do my job, I will just demonstrate the toys and leave but I do other things. I do all this because I like to treat other people the way I would want them to treat me. It is about my work and personal principle.”

On the issue of loyalty, most Participants made suggestions to the effect that their loyalty was tied to monetary and personal benefits as they would not hesitate to leave the organisation the minute they get a better offer elsewhere. **Participant D** specifically states “I think I will stay here for as long as I’m getting the hours and I’m getting the room to develop having said that if I get a better offer elsewhere I won’t stay here.” In assessing the responses of participants using the assertions of Walker, WJ,(2013) citing Robinson, Kraatz & Rousseau (1994) as he opines that relational contract contains none economic terms and concerns more intangible issues, such as interpersonal treatment, job security and professional development, it is would seem that the employment relationship and nature of psychological contract tends to be more transactional. The reason for this lies in the economic and tangible expectations of employees for the time and efforts put into their work.

However not all participants shared the above notion, two of the interviewees, **Participants B and C** shared some kind of similar opinions on commitment and loyalty. **Participant B** believed she owes a bit of loyalty to her employers because they were good to her at her bad time, she gave an interesting example of when they were good to her to include the period she was going through trying times in her family; when she lost her unborn grand-daughter, she was given time off work to spend with her daughter and when she recently went through a separation from her partner, her employers showed a bit of concern, sympathised with her and gave her time off work to get herself together. All this she recollected with thankfulness for her employer’s humane side saying all the above will make her have second thought about leaving if something better came along

Participant D equally states he is loyal and committed to his employer for a different reason other than the one stated by **Participant C**, he talked about the feeling of indebtedness to his employers, perhaps he feels he owes his employers time for the amount of training he has been exposed to and also anticipates advancement opportunity along the line. When asked if

he sees himself as having no obligation to remain with your organisation, he responded with “I do have an obligation to stay in my organisation for the immediate future.” On further probing to understand his reasons, he states “I feel I owe it to the shop to work out my time, to be here and to do my job properly, to stay as long as possible and I will only leave if it was last option, say my organisation goes burst. Out of loyalty nearly I’d stay here.”

From majority of the responses, it seems employees were committed to their organisation largely due to their personal work ethics of doing their best when there is a job to be done pending when they get an opportunity of better pay elsewhere, same goes for loyalty, they did not think they owed their organisation any loyalty as far as seeking for better financial benefits is concerned. The kind of commitment employees of the toy stores described and displayed is what Maguire Heather (2003) refers to as “continuance commitment which may exist with or without associated affective commitment, may be maintained by a lack of alternatives to the employee’s current job (Newell & Dopson 1996)”

This again acts as a pointer to the existence of Transaction element of psychological contract in toy stores and contrast in significant dimensions to CIPD Factsheets (2013); CIPD change Agenda (2005) findings in which suggestions was made to the effect that employees still want job security, still prepared to offer loyalty even though they might feel less committed to the organisation. In practise this was not found to be so in toy stores.

To find out if employees and employers were in tune with expectations and obligations from each other, the same questions were put to managers and employees. The responses/ findings indicated they were in sync with expectations and obligations from each other. Although management expected employees to be loyal to the toy stores, only two out of the six participants were prepared to offer loyalty, the others did not factor in being loyal but were

more concerned with personal and financial benefits and were ready to move to any company that can offer that to them.

The importance of employees and employers being in tune with expectations and obligations form each other cannot be overstated, some of the importance were highlighted earlier in this paper, they include reduction in psychological contract breach and violation, although it was stated that breach and violation cannot be entirely avoided, Tyagi and Agrawal (2010), but it could be greatly minimised if expectations and obligations are made known to each other by deploying various channels of communications.

Participants were asked what obligations or duties they owe their employers; their response gives the impression of clarity in understanding of what is expected of them by their employers. Though they stated it differently they were largely in agreement as to commitment to their work and respect for their employers. One interesting but unpopular view was clearly expressed by **Participant B** in relation to what obligation and duties she owes her employer – “Well I need to give them a 100% (commitment) and I think they deserve respect and loyalty. I’m definitely old school when it comes to my relationship with my employers.” The aspect of referring to herself as old school might be explained away considering her age of forty nine (49) years. Although participants were aware that employees would want their loyalty they were not prepared to fully give it.

When managers were asked the same question of what duties and obligations their employees owe them, their answer clearly reflects the thoughts of employees, although trust and honesty was added, commitment seemed to be the main expectations **Participant G** who manages a toy store had this to say –“Honesty, trust, loyalty, commitment, I sort of think that loyalty and honesty when staff have both of them then commitment comes in. I basically expect that if I look after my employees they should reciprocate my efforts, I communicate

my expectations of them during the appraisal and review and also at every given opportunity.”

The second question to gauge if employees and employers are in tune with each other as regards expectations and obligation, was put to the participants. Employees were asked what obligations their employers owe them, their responses again were essentially the same though expressed differently. Expectations like providing a safe working environment, respect, appropriate financial reward and advancement opportunities was widely shared as what they expect to get in return for the contributions they make to their organisations. Perhaps the most striking response came from **Participant E** as she clearly put her response across without mincing words – “My employer, and any employer I could have in the future, owes me a meritocracy, an environment free of sexism, adequate payment for my contribution to the company, an acknowledgement that I exist as a human, not a payroll number. I’m owed an environment to work in that isn’t dominated by the personal likes and dislikes of the management team, and to work without fear of reprisal for my personal thoughts and beliefs.”

The same question was put to the manager as to what obligations they owe their employees, the manager started his response by acknowledging the fact their employees are the soul of the business and that philosophically they owe their employees everything. Most interestingly financial rewards was the first thing the managers mentioned, this may likely indicate the role financial reward plays in the present day employment relations in toy store and the fact that employers are conversant with that. **Participant G** who is a manager in one of the toy stores had this to say, “Technically we have to pay them, we have the salary and we have also implemented bonuses to motivate and reward those who do exceptionally well. They are entitled to a review every year, they are entitled to staff uniform, and they are entitled to staff discount and other benefits. Personally I would say I owe them everything in a philosophical way, our staff are the soul of our business, without them the store cannot run itself. Staffs are

the difference between a good store and a rubbish store, the difference between a good store and an exceptional store. I also try to develop them, once they actively seek for development opportunities and at the same time ask those who I think are ready but shy to ask. “Although Participant G (manager) did not mention opportunities for advancement as part of their obligations to their employees, in an earlier question put to him on opportunity for advancement within the organisation, he stated that they were unable to consistently provide opportunity for advancement due to the fact of having just one store in Ireland but have been compensating employees with job enrichment. “Having said that we have a position of team leader available since Peter left and we have 3 people vying for that. Obviously we are going to look externally, hopefully fingers crossed we will take someone from within here. If we do that it will send a signal that the people here are good enough to be promoted, finger crossed that is what is going to happens.” This response seems to indicate the awareness of management obligation to provide employees with opportunities for advancement. From all the responses from the participant it appears that both employees and employers are very much in tune with obligations and expectations from each other. This might majorly be attributed to the various communication channels in place to facilitate better communication as was hinted by the managers in the course of the interview; this may have played a huge role in employees and employers being on par with expectations and obligations from each other. All these are pointers to transactional elements of psychological contract which seems to be hugely reflected in the toy store.

4.7 Conclusion

The result of this research study indicates that the nature of psychological contract in toy stores Ireland is transactional. This research study sailed on the platform of the two major compartmentalisations of psychological contracts (Transactional and Relational contracts) as has been popularly canvassed by volumes of literature on psychological contract, Maguire Heather (2003); Ivan Robertson and Cary Cooper (2001) and Rousseau (1995)

All but one participant spoke in favour of transactional elements of psychological contract as their reason for working in the toy stores, which includes the following, financial rewards expected in return for their performance and contribution to their organisation (financial and personal benefits) training and development (broader range of skills) to improve their employability skills. Therefore it follows that this research agrees with the postulations and findings of Maguire Heather (2003); Rousseau (1995) and Walker, WJ, (2013) that transactional contracts of psychological contract is the contemporary contract in operation in today's workplace. The findings of this research completely backs Walker's assertion which led to his research on ways to reduce the potentially negative effects of transactional contract, he unequivocally states that "psychological contracts in today's workforce continue to evolve from those that are more relational to those that are more transactional." Interestingly, all participants clearly stated that they were all in the toy stores primarily for economic reasons; they viewed themselves as staying only on the short term till they are able to secure better paying jobs.

However, the results also gave insight as to concerns of Participants about unstable market climate which they intend to factor in before moving to another organisation as they would not want to be left without employment shortly after securing another job especially as they have bills like rents, and upkeep to consider. **Participant C** in particularly expresses himself as follows "I am not also sure of what my chances are elsewhere on retaining a job if I left due to the recession we are in. No one knows the next organisation that will go bust, I will

want to be sure that I am making the right choice when the time comes as I don't want to be out of job for any particular length in time, I have got bills to take care that cannot wait.”

Equally in the same vain, the results of this research disagrees with the argument put forward by Ivan Robertson (2001, pg.410) that ‘a hybrid form of psychological contract is emerging, that which seeks to reconcile the specified requirement of conventional transactional contract with traditional relational agreements between employee and employer.’ All the through the course of this research study, the researcher noted that participants who work in toy stores did so for purely transactional purpose and at no instance did the researcher stumble on any participant who exhibited both conventional transactional contract and relational attributes of psychological contract. The closest we saw to this combination was noticed with the response of **Participant G**, most of his responses fell within the confines of transactional relation but when asked if he as an employer takes the concerns himself with employees’ personal welfare, he answered in the affirmative, stating that it is part of ways to motivate staff by referring to it as a favour done to employees with the hope of such favour being reciprocated, this no doubt ties in with transactional dealings, and not a combination or fusion of transactional and relational contract elements. In essence the hybrid form of psychological contract alluded by Ivan Robertson (2001) remains to be seen, at least in practise.

This research study sets out to investigate the nature of psychological contract in toy stores and now concludes with grounded theories emerging from this research process that it is inevitably transactional form of contract judging by the responses to the semi-structured in-depth interviews. Although the researcher did not set out to measure the breach of psychological contract, it is important to note and bring in some of the impressions participants have regarding their employment relationship. Some participants had the perception of unequal exchange, though they acknowledged the fact that they were in toy store for monetary reward, they felt they were not being paid enough for the work they do.

Participant E gave more clarity as follows “ I have no obligations to remain with my company beyond the statutory notice period this is because I feel exploited rather than valued. I get asked to do a lot of work without the equivalent pay. I have had to take up extra responsibility like opening and closing the store, managing a team of about 5 staff and doing supervisory duties that I’m not being paid for.” This itself may be interpreted as breach of psychological contract which research and empirical evidence has been shown to lead to negative work attitude. Maguire Heather (2003) has put forward the following suggestion “to retain balance in the psychological contract, any perceived increase in employee obligations to the organisation needs to be matched by a perception of increased rewards.” When this is done, it may result in boosting employees’ commitment, organisational citizenship behaviour and loyalty to the organisation. Most literatures and research finding are abound on the importance of organisations having a committed workforce.

It was also discovered that the employers obligation in toy stores fully reflected the thoughts of Perry Pascarella(1988) which is cited in Maguire Heather (2003) which confirms that there is a new psychological contract from the perspective of the employer obligation with the following highlights which was discovered to be the present day reality, this sums up contemporary employment relations.

- We can’t promise you how long we will be in business
- We can’t promise we won’t be bought by another company
- We can’t promise there will be room for promotion
- We can’t promise you your job will exist until you reach retirement age
- We can’t promise the money will be available for your pension when you retire

This paper contributes to the psychological contract literatures in a number of ways. It is one of the few papers if not the only study that explore the nature of psychological contract in toy stores.

Secondly, this paper highlights the needs and importance of positive psychological contracts in toy stores, this is consistent with the vast majority of literatures out there, Ivan Robertson and Cary Cooper (2001); Tyagi, A, & Agrawal, R (2010); Turnley, W, & Feldman (2000) and Maguire Heather (2003)

Finally this paper offers a few suggestions to managers on how to better manage and create a positive psychological contract starting from the very beginning- interview and selection stage. Effective communication has been shown to be a good tool in conveying upfront and clear expectations and obligations of the company to employees, applicants and equally what the organisation will give back in return, Michael Armstrong (2012); Taylor Stephen (2011)

4.8 Limitations and Future Research

The cross-sectional and non-experimental nature of this research means that the findings cannot be conclusive and generalized, although there are theoretical backings to the results of this study. Future research using longitudinal methods maybe needed to confirm the findings of this paper and also explore the nature of psychological contract in other sectors of the economy.

Another limitation is the use of only qualitative methods especially considering the fact that most research carried out on psychological contract were done using quantitative method,

future research may consider a combination of qualitative method (in-depth interviews) and quantitative methods (questionnaires) to generate a more conclusive findings.

Also future research should also consider the evolving nature of psychological contract using the in-depth interviews style together with the questionnaires and maybe survey groups involving employees on the one hand and employers on the other hand to gauge what changes there are to employee and employers duties and obligations are before and after the economic boom using both employees and employers measure of the psychological contract rather than the usual employee measures only. The employer side of the equation needs to be investigated as well especially as the psychological contract is about the reciprocal nature of two contracting parties-employer and employees', Ivan Robertson & Cary Cooper (2001)

Still on limitation the researcher slated to have eight participants (two managers and six employees) but was only able to interview seven because the eight participants (a manager) was unavoidably unavailable. Perhaps having had the opportunity to interview the eight might has given this researcher much more rich data to work on. Future research should consider a balanced number of employees and employer to enable a balanced perspective.

4.9 Managing the Transactional Nature of Contracts in Toy Stores

4.10 Recommendation

It will only be fair to offer suggestions on how to manage the transactional nature of contract that have been shown to exist in toy stores having earlier espoused on how to generally

manage psychological contract. Given the volume of literature that has pointed to transactional contract being the new normal in organisations, toy store inclusive as this research has unearthed. Coupled with the volume of literatures pointing in the direction that transactional component of psychological contract is negatively associated to attitudinal outcomes among which are job satisfaction and organizational commitment, Rousseau, D.M. (1990) ; Walker, W. J. (2013). It is expedient to explore ways of cushioning the negative effects. It should be noted that no organisation survives without the commitment of its employees' to this end it is only proper to explore ways to improve employees commitment, management should consider total employee involvement in running the organisation, this entails sharing risk as well as reward, sharing important information, delegating (sharing) of management authority and responsibility for performance management, Hiltrop, JM (1996). Implementing this will most likely give employees a sense of responsibility and ownership.

Armstrong (2012) posits that if people believe in the mission and can identify with the values, aims and objectives of an organisation they may work hard but will work harder if they believe achieving these values benefits them also. More recently in sharing the same thoughts Walker, WJ, (2013) explored that line of thinking in managing the transactional psychological contract, his research findings places emphasis and proves the importance of person-organisational fit as one of the ways to manage the employer-employee relation especially as it relates to transactional contract. Walker posits that employees' personality, values and norms when aligned with that of the organisation may 'insulate employees from negative feelings that can be associated with transactional contract. In summary and added to the above, implementation of HR practises such as opportunities for learning and development etc., has also been suggested as one of the ways to cushion or reduce the negative effects on work attitudes that comes with highly transactional psychological contract, Armstrong M (2009). With the recession and unstable market situation, McCoy, and

Elwood, (2009) sums it all with the following words “Clearly in the face of adversity, organisations need their people to demonstrate attitudes and associated behaviours that, when combined, act as a cohesive and combative force,”

5.0 SELF-REFLECTION

5.1 Introduction

The topic of my research has always been an area of great interest having seen changes in employment relations in recent years and how employees have reacted to these changes. This research availed me a rare opportunity especially with the backing of the school to explore the nature of the present relationship between employers and employees as regard their mutual obligations, both written and unwritten towards each other. I got to discover the practicality of psychological contract theories, employer and employees perception and what it meant to different people I interviewed as an integral part of this study.

Like Mullins JM (2010, Pg. 171) describes Learning as a “part of the human condition and is a familiar process to us all”. This implies that it is human nature to continually seek knowledge; this in part must have explained why I embarked on a Master’s degree in Human Resource Management (HRM) at Dublin Business School (DBS) in September 2012.

5.2 Learning Style

“Learning styles indicate various approaches to, or method of, learning and the ways in which people learn” Mullins JM (2010, Pg. 172)

The start of my HRM programme at DBS proved to be a challenging experience especially having been out of school for about eight years. Combining a part-time programme with full time work and being a mother to three young kids was certainly not going to be an easy task. Finding the time and right balance was crucial to the successful completion of my course. To help in this regard I had to discover how best to learn (a learning style that suited me) as suggested by Mullins JM (2010, Pg. 172) “An understanding of how people learn provides insight into vital aspects of our humanity- the process of growth, development and deterioration... learning is a function of the inner workings of our mind and its invisibility has created a number of mythological difficulties.”

Since the learning styles and capabilities of individuals differ, it was important to know the learning style that most suited my personality. One of the best known models of learning style is that of Honey and Mumford, they simplified and refined Kolb’s learning cycle, Mullins J M(2010). According to Honey and Mumford, there are four learning styles associated with patterns of behaviours – Activists, Reflectors, Theorists, and Pragmatist.

Through the course of my study at Dublin Business School, I got to discover that my personality and learning style fits into that of Reflectors. Invariably it meant I fell within the bracket of people who are cautious, slow in reaching conclusions, observant and thorough thinkers, Mullins JM (2010). Being a reflective learner who liked to take time to thoroughly think about any course of action before getting started, I knew time was not on my side in this cross-sectional research I had to consciously adopt and manage all the four learning styles to allow me effectively complete my research in a timely fashion as suggested by Mullins JM

(2010, Pg. 186)” An integrated and effective learner will be equipped to managed all four styles even though they may have a preference for one.” Being a reflector, I took practical steps to avoid over-thinking my course of action and starting off in earnest by penning down all the necessary steps for the research and immediately getting to work. To put literally I took a proactive step.

5.3 Personal Insight

The interview process was one of the enjoyable and relaxing part of the different steps undertaken in this study. Initiating I was a bit panicky as I have never really done any interviews before, after the first two interviews, I relaxed realising that it was not daunting a task as I envisaged. Adopting a qualitative research with a semi-structured interview style gave room for flexibility and largely responsible for the rich relevant materials acquired for the study. To guide me properly in the research I took on board valuable tips from my dissertation supervisor and Fisher Colin (2004) on steps to follow in steering a semi-structured interview which proved to be useful. This allowed the participants to feel at ease with the interview process thereby opening up with adequate time to reflect upon the questions. At the end of each interview, I found myself reflecting on my way home and in work the next day on what transpired in the course of the interview and what new insights I got, I made mental notes and transferred them to my diary the moment I got the chance. Responses were also categorised in their right compartment by ticking off the relevant boxes I made on a spreadsheet prior to interviews, this help a great deal in my final analysis towards my research objectives

5.5 Conclusion

On embarking on my course of study, my primary objective was to wrap up my dissertation having in mind it was the final stage to get me my MA HRM qualification. The overall process was a huge learning experience for me; I got to discover I was much more capable of doing things I thought I could not do. I developed new learning skills, cognitive and the ability to critically evaluate findings. That notwithstanding, there were times I had personal concern at my ability to logically and coherently incorporate the ever increasing relevant materials from both secondary and primary research, this led to momentary despair and mental blocks which slowed my research work. I had to find motivation by speaking to DBS librarians and colleagues to needed motivation to carry on. There were equally instances I spent a lot of time reflecting on how to carry on with the research, almost to the detriment of judiciously utilizing valuable and limited time, Facebook messages from colleagues highlighting the different stages they were on jolted me back to putting words on paper as I reflected.

On reflection I am glad I chose the topic of Nature of psychological contract in toy stores as it availed me deep insight and opened up the inner thoughts of employees as regards their employment relations. The qualitative research method helped a lot towards achieving this, as I don't think I would have achieved it by way of quantitative research. I have equally learnt how to effectively apportion and manage my time in project which has given me a huge sense of satisfaction that I was able to complete this research in a timely fashion going by the number of things I have had to juggle through.

If there was anything I would have done differently; the only regret was that I was not able to interview all my slated participants, I only succeeded in interviewing seven out of the eight

because one had an accident and was out sick for several weeks. In hindsight I should have slated more number of participants to cover for unforeseen circumstance like the one mentioned. Having learnt from this, I am better informed of how to prepare for any other future research.

Indeed it was a great learning experience, I have had to learn how to effectively manage my timing, learnt how to use or employ and combine other learning styles to manage future project and feel more comfortable about asking for help from those who are more experienced.

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7.0 APPENDICES

7.1 Appendix 1 - Copy of Research Questions Presented to the Manager

7.2 Appendix 2 - Copy of Research Questions Presented to Employees

7.3 Appendix 3 - Informed Consent form

Appendix 1 - Copy of Research Questions Presented to the Employees

Thank you for taking the time to sit for this interview. This interview is purely for academic work geared towards getting a degree from my college DBS.

You are assured of highest confidentiality, contents of this interview will not be used for purposes other than that what has been stated and your name will not be featured in the finished work.

My topic of research is the nature of psychological contract in toy stores in Ireland.

Psychological contract is defined to make for easy understanding of what my research topic.

Psychological contract is simply defined as the “Perception of two parties, employee and employer, of what their mutual obligations are towards each other.”

QUESTIONS FOR EMPLOYEES

- 1) Would you leave your organisation without second thoughts if you are presented with the opportunity?
- 2) Would you view yourself as having no obligations to remain with your organisation?
- 3) Would you take your company's concerns personally?
- 4) Do you perform the bare minimum task required to keep your job?
- 5) Have you adjusted to the changing performance demands due to business necessity?

- 6) Do you seek out developmental opportunities that enhance your value to your employer?
- 7) Are you building skills to increase your future employment opportunities elsewhere?
- 8) Do you plan on remaining with this store indefinitely?
- 9) Do you plan to stay here for long?
- 10) Do you have opportunity for advancement within your organisation
- 11) What obligations do you owe your employer?
- 12) What obligations do your employers owe you?

Appendix 2 - Copy of Research Questions Presented to the Manager

Thank you for taking the time to sit for this interview. This interview is purely for academic work geared towards getting a degree from my college DBS.

You're assured of highest confidentiality, contents of this interview will not be used for purposes other than that what has been stated and your name will not be featured in the finished work.

My topic of research is the nature of psychological contract in toy stores in Ireland.

Psychological contract is defined to make for easy understanding of what my research topic.

Psychological contract is simply defined as the "Perception of two parties, employee and employer, of what their mutual obligations are towards each other."

Questions for the Manager

1. Are your employees' offered jobs only for as long as you need them?
2. How many employees' do you have and how many are on short term/temporary employment or part-time staff?
3. Do you show concern for employee personal welfare?
4. Are you responsive for their personal concern and well-being?
5. Do you support your employees to attain the highest possible levels of performance?
6. Do your employees' have opportunity for advancement within your organisation

7. Do they get opportunity for promotions?
8. Do you help employees develop external marketable skills?
9. Do employees have secure employment?
10. What obligations do you owe your employees?
11. What obligations do your employees owe you?

7.3 - Appendix 3- Informed Consent Form

DUBLIN BUSINESS SCHOOL

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Name: Eresi Grace OKoh

Programme: MA HRM (Master's Degree in Human Resource Management)

Research Study: "Nature of Psychological Contract in Toy stores Ireland"

Dear.....,

I am a post- graduate student at Dublin Business School. Enclosed are my contact details and that of the academic supervisor who is supervising this dissertation.

I am exploring the nature of psychological contract in toy stores. I will be very much appreciative in getting your perspective, views, opinions and interpretation of the psychological contract in place in your organisation based on you experience.

Therefore, I am seeking your participation in my research study by answering some questions by means of a semi- formal interview. Subject to your consent, the interview will be recorded

for ease of transcription and to avoid loss of data at a venue, time and date suitable to your convenience.

If however you feel uncomfortable at any point in time during the interview, please let me know and we can either stop the interview or reschedule at a time more appropriate. You can also choose not to answer any questions that you feel uncomfortable with and move on to the next question at any point in time during the interview.

Any particular sensitive or specific information provided in the course of this interview you do not want added, will not be added.

Most importantly, it is my intention to make this interview highly confidential, information that will be revealing of neither your identity nor your organisation will be excluded in the finished work, as well as no individual or organisations will be identified without their written consent. The tapes or recordings will be destroyed at the end of this research. This research has been approved by Dublin Business School.

Research Student: Eresi Grace Okoh

Tel:

Academic Supervisor: Shakeel Siddiqui

Tel:

Participant:

I hereby agree to participate in this research study having been made fully aware of the extent of my participation and associated risk.

Printed Name of Participant and Toy Store

Title/Position/ Occupation of Participant

Signature and Date of Participant

Signature of Researcher
