

**EXPERIENCES OF THE PSYCHOLOGICAL CONTRACT, WORK ENGAGEMENT
AND LIFE SATISFACTION OF LEARNERS IN THE CHEMICAL INDUSTRY**

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DECLARATION

I, Franscina, Johanna, Petronella Swanepoel, hereby declare that all the sources I have used or quoted within the dissertation titled “EXPERIENCES OF THE PSYCHOLOGICAL CONTRACT, WORK ENGAGEMENT AND LIFE SATISFACTION OF LEARNERS IN THE CHEMICAL INDUSTRY”, is my own work and have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

REMARKS

The reader is reminded of the following:

This study is according to the Publication Manual (6th edition) of the American Psychological (APA) as well as all the references, and the editorial style. This practice is in line with the policy of the programme in Labour Relations Management and Industrial Psychology at the North-West University.

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SUMMARY

Title: Experiences of the psychological contract, work engagement and life satisfaction of learners in the chemical industry

Key words: skills development, learners' expectations, employer obligations, employee obligations, state of the psychological contract, trust, violation of the psychological contract, employability, life satisfaction and work engagement.

The rapid change within the South African workplace and competitiveness of organisations required employed and unemployed individuals to be trained and retrained as a large number of the South African population is unskilled. In the chemical industry employability of individuals is of extra ordinarily importance to both employer and individual. One of the main focuses of the Chemical Industries Education and Training Authority (CHIETA) is to enable learners through the promotion of employability to enter into learnerships to develop the necessary skills to develop sustainable livelihoods (CHIETA, 2011).

There are high expectations of the learnerships system which was implemented during 2001 in South Africa. This system is set as a key strategic component of the National Skills Development Strategy, 2011-2016. Learnership programmes are implemented in South African organisations which is a great platform for employee development. Employees are afforded the opportunity to broaden their knowledge in the studied field and gain the needed skills within the organisation (Department of Labour, 1997).

Learnerships are seen as a demand driven formal labour market tool, to address the existing need for critical, scarce - high and intermediate - skills levels. Simultaneously, it is seen as an employment-creation mechanism at the low and intermediate skills levels. This statement is a fundamental principle of a survey done on learnerships (Smith, Jennings, & Solanki, 2005). Researchers concluded that learnership programmes are the ideal for employees to acquire the needed skills to become competent and to provide jobs for the unemployed and in this manner enhance employability (Smith et al., 2005).

The main aim of article one was to determine the differences in the levels of the psychological contracts, violation of the psychological contract, learners' expectations, employability, life satisfaction and work engagement between individual variables (type of

learnership contracts, gender, race, age, date of commencement of learnership, date of completion of learnership). A cross-sectional survey design was used. A total of 237 learners completed the questionnaire. The psychological contract scale, violation of the psychological contract scale, learners' expectations scale, employability scale, life satisfaction scale, work engagement scale and biographical scale were administered. The results indicated that a statistically significant difference was obtained for age, date of commencement of learnership and date of completion of learnership, but no relationship exists with type of learnership contract, gender and race.

The aim of the second article was to determine the relationship between learners within learnership psychological contract, state of the psychological contract, expectations and violations of psychological contract, employability, work engagement and life satisfaction. Furthermore, the study strives to determine whether violation of the psychological contract, learners' expectations and employability could predict life satisfaction of learners. A practically significant relationship with a medium effect exists between violation of the psychological contract, state of psychological contract (negative), and employability (positive). A positive practically significant relationship exists between state of psychological contract and work engagement. No relationship was found between employability, life satisfaction and work engagement. A positive practically significant relationship with a medium effect exists between life satisfaction and work engagement. Employer obligations and employability predict life satisfaction. The state of the psychological contract (trust) and life satisfaction predict work engagement of learners.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND PROBLEM STATEMENT

1.1 INTRODUCTION AND PROBLEM STATEMENT

Education and training comprises a significant part in the development of employees (Coetzee, 2002). The Department of Labour contributes great support to the development of South African citizens through the various skills development initiatives, e.g. following the Skills Development Act 97 of 1998 (SDA); Skills Levy Act 9 of 1999 (SDL) and the National Skills Development Strategy 2011-2016 (NSDS). The chemical industry is categorised under the Chemical Industries Education and Training Authority (CHIETA), seen as one of the more competent Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETA's) in the country. As the current milieu is that of an ageing population, it is crucial for people aged 45 years and older to keep up with current work-related skills and knowledge in order to remain in or return to employment (Ferrier, Burke & Smith, 2008). This study considers the diverse nature of labour force and skills development within the Chemical industry. Banerjee, Galiani, Levinsohn, McLaren and Woolard, (2008, p. 715-740) mentioned that the full-time labour market, particularly the youth, has collapsed and the participation rate of females has significantly increased. Therefore, it is important to focus on individual variables of learners within learnerships.

One of the main focuses of the CHIETA is the promotion of employability of learners entering a learnership by the CHIETA. Learnerships will enable learners to develop the necessary skills in order to develop sustainable livelihoods (CHIETA, 2011). Employability can be seen as a very important factor before training or employing employees and can be defined as an achievement and their potential to gain a job. Achievements are related to acquire skills and knowledge itself but most importantly to include transferable skills and personal attributes gained from studying in a field of interest (Tin, 2006).

An individual is seen as employable when he/she has gained certain attributes to fulfil a role in the corporate market. A person can be seen as employable once he/she has acquired certain

contributions as (knowledge, skills, and abilities), which will attribute to the individual being more successful in preferred occupations. According to Viswanathan (2007) employability is more than developing attributes, techniques or experience to enable a learner to get a job, or to progress within a current career. The accent is on learning and less on 'employ' and more on 'ability'. Therefore, do learners see themselves as more employable after completing a learnership program? If not, do they feel that violation of the learnership and psychological contract agreement has occurred?

Within the chemical industry, it is important to focus on learners' perceptions and expectations within learnership programs. The learners are full-time employees within a chemical company or unemployed learners. As there are no previous studies done on the perceptions of learners within a learnership, it is important to do a study on the perceptions of full-time employees as well as unemployed learners within learnerships. Previous studies on the psychological contract mainly focused on the development of managers who enrolled for MBA studies, and not on learners within learnerships (Jeffery, 2010).

As a CHIETA board member and Chairperson for the Joint Stakeholder Forum in South Africa, the researcher was involved in many discussions in meetings concerning learnerships for process operations. The importance of learnerships lies in the fact that these learners are employed with the idea that they will gain enough experience to be able to sustain a job and enrich their skills, seen as a full qualification if it is done through an accredited provider, assessed and a certificate is issued by the CHIETA. This will also be valid in any chemical industry when applying for a job in process operations. Thus the expectations of the learner supersede the learnership contract between learner and employer/company. Trust is violated as soon as their contract expires and they are down and without a job. This in turn has a perpetual effect on their life satisfaction and behaviour (De Cuyper & De Witte, 2006).

A relationship in the work environment is seen as a social interaction, historically originating from the reciprocity norms. The psychological contract is the foundation for the ratio of employment beliefs. Important elements of the psychological contract consist of common promises and obligations made by relevant parties. Guest and Conway (2002) introduced the idea of the state of the psychological contract. Compliance to promises and commitments made as well as the fairness and implications within a trust relationship are referred to as the state of the psychological contract (Stoner & Gallagher, 2010). The following question can be

posed: Do learners trust the company regarding promises made (verbally or in writing) regard to the learnership?

Delivery or fulfilment or breach of the contract, is being widely studied, and some studies have even expanded research on the dissimilarity between the breach and violation (Robinson & Brown, 2004). Much less well established is the status of fairness and trust in existing research on the psychological contract. Guest and Conway (2002) have argued in favour of including both variables in research on the psychological contract as components of its state, thus reincorporating the contributions in the study of the psychological contract and employment relations. No research was previously done on learners and whether they experience the state of the psychological contract equally to permanent employees within learnerships.

The status of fairness and trust are well established in existing research on the psychological contract. Conway and Briner (2005) stated that both variables are a positive inclusion in studies of the psychological contract as components of the state of the psychological contract. Lack of research done on the experience of unemployed learners and full-time employees within learnerships and their state of the psychological contract.

As both parties has beliefs coming from the exchange relationship regards to their psychological contracts and their beliefs and expectations are not met they can feel that the psychological contract is violated, cause distrust, disappointment and possibly the termination of the relationship itself (Robinson & Rousseau, 1994). Violation of the psychological contract is explained by Robinson and Morrison (2000, p. 545-546) as “the emotional and attitudinal state that may, under certain conditions, follow from the belief that one's employer failed to adequately maintain the psychological contract”.

Violation of the psychological contract may lead to turnover and grievances, and may also affect security and satisfaction of individuals that can result in reduced organisational commitment, Rousseau (2011, p. 191-220). Implications are that individuals may interpret the terms and conditions of an agreement different from what the employer intended it to mean, which could lead to a dispute, conflict of interest, dissatisfaction and this may have an impact on life and job satisfaction (Fitzgerald, Haythornthwaite, Suchday & Ewart, 2003;

Jurado, Gurpegui, Moreno, Fernández, Luna, & Gálvez, 2005; Piko, 2006; Svensen, Arnets, Ursin & Eriksen, 2007).

The remedy for the experience of violation in the psychological contract by learners is the understanding of the various contributing factors to that of negative experience. Once the contributing factors are identified it will promote the positive experience of employees that will build on their experiences and duplicate them in similar organisational situations (Heller, Judge & Watson, 2002). The question that can be posed is whether learners who experience violation also have higher negative outcomes (life satisfaction) than those who do not experience violation.

Saks (2006) stated that justice perception and perceived support received from the employer will persuade employees to engage more optimistically in the working environment. An employee has the need to be trusted and supported by the employer in order to develop a successful relationship. The researcher's opinion is that resources such as training and developing "learners" or employees through learnerships will encourage learners to work engagement.

The significance of work engagement has positive returns for the employer. Job satisfaction and work performance have the tendency to be present, only if the employee experiences high levels of life satisfaction. A relationship exists between life satisfaction and well-being: people who experience a better quality of life satisfaction also report better well-being (Campbell, Converse & Rodgers, 1980). Life satisfaction are one of three indicators of well-being, the other two being (positive affect and negative affect), which is a total evaluation of feelings and attitudes about one's life at a specific moment in time, ranging between negative and positive (Beutell, 2006). One may ask the question: Are learners within learnerships in the chemical industry experiencing work engagement and do they experience life satisfaction?

Research studies proved that work engagement and life satisfaction play a role in positive human behaviour and can be defined as individuals' psychological well-being, evaluated by their mood status, social interaction and goal achievement, self-concepts, and self-perception to cope with everyday life (Bakker, Schaufeli, Leiter & Taris, 2008). The trust relationship between management, supervisors and employees is a contributing factor in developing and

maintaining the level of work engagement of employees (Chughtai & Buckley, 2008). The studies by Parzefall and Hakanen (2010) and McInnis (2012) was the only psychological contract study to measure work engagement. Therefore, it is necessary to address the existing shortcoming by studying the relationship between the psychological contract and work engagement. More specifically no researches have looked at the psychological contract of learners and their work engagement.

The subsequent research questions are formulated based on the above-mentioned narrative of the research problems:

- How are the psychological contracts, violation of the psychological contract, learners' expectations, employability, life satisfaction and work engagement conceptualised in the literature?
- Do differences occur in the levels of the psychological contracts, violation of the psychological contract, learners' expectations, employability, life satisfaction, work engagement and individual variables?
- What is the relationship between psychological contracts, violation of the psychological contract, learner's expectations, employability, life satisfaction and work engagement?
- Can experience of violation of the psychological contract, learner's expectations and employability be used to predict life satisfaction and work engagement?

The study will contribute to information regarding learners' psychological contract, violation of the psychological contract of learners, expectations of learners, employability, life satisfaction and work engagement. In South Africa, information on learners is limited and little documentation of similar information exists. It will also shed more light on life satisfaction and work engagement of learners, thereby providing companies with more detail on learnership with information on the psychological contract, violation of the psychological contract of learners, expectations of learners, employability, life satisfaction and work engagement.

1.2 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1.2.1 General objectives

The general objective of the study is to investigate how work engagement and life satisfaction are influenced by learners' expectations, employability as well as violation of the psychological contract, and what the role is of the psychological contract and the state of the psychological contract.

1.2.2 Specific objectives

Article 1

- To determine how the psychological contract, violation of the psychological contract, learners' expectations, employability, life satisfaction and work engagement are conceptualised in the literature.
- To determine the differences in the levels of the psychological contracts, violation of the psychological contract, learners' expectations, employability, life satisfaction and work engagement between individual variables (type of learnership contracts, gender, race, age, commence date of learnership, completion date of learnership).

Article 2

- To determine the relationship between psychological contract, violation of the psychological contract, learners' expectations, employability, life satisfaction and work engagement in a sample of learners.
- To determine whether experience of violation of the psychological contract, learners' expectations and employability can be used to predict life satisfaction and work engagement.

1.3 PARADIGM PERSPECTIVE OF THE RESEARCH

The research is directed through a specific paradigm perspective including the intellectual climate and the market of intellectual resources (Mouton & Marais, 1996). Babbie (2013) explains paradigms when referring to basically the same thing, i.e. the approach the researcher selects for studying a particular phenomenon. Where the general approach to the study – i.e. all the decisions a researcher makes in planning the study - is referred to as design, as is the case in Creswell (2012), the more specific step or action in this process is referred to as a tradition of inquiry. The importance is that all scientific research lead is done within a specific paradigm, or manner in which one's research material are seen. The researcher must therefore decide within which paradigm he/she is working, have good knowledge of the nature of his selected paradigm, and put this in a precise manner in his research report to clearly and unambiguously maintain communication with his reading public (De Vos, Strydom, Fouché & Delport, 2011).

1.3.1 Intellectual climate

Direction is given to the study, through a definite paradigm perspective including intellectual climate and the market of intellectual resources (Lundin, 2005; Mouton & Marais, 1996). The variation of meta-theoretical values and beliefs and non-epistemological convictions are referred to by the intellectual climate that are held and certified by those practising within a discipline in a specific time-frame.

The intellectual climate surrounding this study is based on assumption proven through previous international research done in the field of psychological contracts, violation of the psychological contract, learners' expectations, employability, life satisfaction, work engagement and biographic variables – the relationship between learner, psychological contracts, and violation of the psychological contract, learners' expectations, employability, life satisfaction and work engagement. No previous research has been done on the psychological contract and learners within South Africa.

1.3.2 Discipline

This study falls within the borders of behavioural sciences and more specific within labour relations management, industrial psychology and industrial sociology.

1.3.3 Meta-theoretical assumptions

Involvements of meta-theoretical assumptions are concerned with other assumptions of theories and the paradigms for this research are separated. Firstly, the literature review that focuses on the humanistic paradigm and social exchange theory. Secondly, the empirical study through the phenomenological paradigm.

The *humanistic paradigm* is a notion that emphasizes humane aspects e.g. to resolve conflicts constructively, to encourage growth and development, to involve others in decision making and to motivate by serving as a role model. It also states that people constantly strive towards becoming self-actualised or fully functioning individuals. Part of the work of Maslow and Rogers, humanism's point of departure is that people value positive regard, personal growth, psychological health and optimal functioning, implying that individuals are conscious, are more than the sum of their total parts, live purposefully and are constantly making choices (Plug, Louw, Gouws & Meyer, 1997).

According to Skinner (1978) the following basic assumptions are relevant in this regard: the biased experience within an individual's frame of reference must be taken into account to understand behaviour (phenomenology), although it must be understood that behaviour is not inhibited by either past experience or current circumstances of the individual (determinism). Instead, people can make choices (free will).

Relevant to this paradigm, people can be influenced by their association with others and they are more than just the sum of their parts. Bergh and Theron (2009) states that the relationship between the following basic suppositions in this ratio must be understood in terms of the subjective experience of the individual (phenomenology):

- behaviour is not restricted by either previous experience of the individual or the individuals existing situation (determinism). Therefore, people can make their own decision (free will);
- the notion that individuals are intrinsically good, have a free will which lead to that not all actions is established;
- that individuals are unique and have an inherent drive to achieve potential;
- individuals are free agents with the skill to make decisions, be deliberate and conscious during their behaviour.

As cited by Bergh and Theron (2009), the humanistic approach is not based on a single theory but made up of various theories within the phenomenological, existential and self-theories. Compared to other personality theories, these are not personality theories but rather idealistic ideas about how people exist and find meaning in life. This is well thought-out essential norm for psychological health (DeCarvalho, 1991).

The psychological contract is historically viewed as a social exchange contract theory that is seen as an extension of a philosophical concept (Keyser, 2010; Roehling, 1997; Schein, 1978). Within the employment contract a contract is about exchange between the parties. As mentioned by Blau (2009), the social exchange theory is all about parties providing something to one another, with the expectations that the other party would counter-perform in return. These contracts between the parties can change over time.

Nowadays researchers view the employers' perceptions of the employment relationship more and more from an individual perspective nature. Therefore, it becomes more relevant for both researchers and practitioners within the employment relations field (Freese, 2007).

1.3.4 Theoretical beliefs

Theoretical beliefs include definitions and models and theories of research.

A. Conceptual definitions

Conceptual definitions relevant to this study:

Expectations: ‘Met expectations’ are explained by Porter and Steers (1973) as differences that are experienced positively or negatively by a person on the job and what he expected to receive.

Psychological contract: The psychological contract was defined by Rousseau (1989, p.123) as “an individual’s beliefs regarding the terms and conditions of a reciprocal exchange relationship the terms and conditions of a reciprocal exchange agreement between that focal person and another party”.

State of the psychological contract: The state of the psychological contract comprises of a broader evaluation as the work relationship, this was formed by the pledges and obligations of the psychological contract, but go beyond them. Trust was defined by Robinson (1996, p. 576) as "one's expectations, assumptions, or beliefs about the likelihood that another's future actions would be beneficial, favourable, or at least not detrimental to one's interest". According to Rousseau, Sitkin, Burt and Camerer (1998) trust is defined as a psychological condition that consists of the willingness of a person to accept vulnerability based on positive expectations of intent or behaviour of others.

Life satisfaction: Guest and Conway (2000) stated that life satisfaction can be seen as high levels of commitment which lead to improved organisational commitment, lower absenteeism and turnover levels, improved performance, pro-active behaviour and learning, motivation and life satisfaction.

Work Engagement: The definition of work engagement is a positive rewarding, emotional-motivational condition of job-related well-being which can also be considered to be cognitive, emotional and behavioural. Work engagement is also characterised by strength, commitment and inclusion as well as a job-related state of fulfilment within employees (Bakker, Schaufeli, Leiter & Taris, 2008; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004).

Learners: The learners can either be full-time employees or unemployed people within a chemical company (CHIETA, 2011).

Model

The model can illustrate what impact certain aspects have on relationships and the dimensions thereof (Mouton & Marais, 1996). This study was used as a guideline for the formulation of the psychological contract that will be applied to the learnership program. A psychological contract exists when there is a learner, learnership and the employer that provides development opportunities. This framework is demonstrated below.

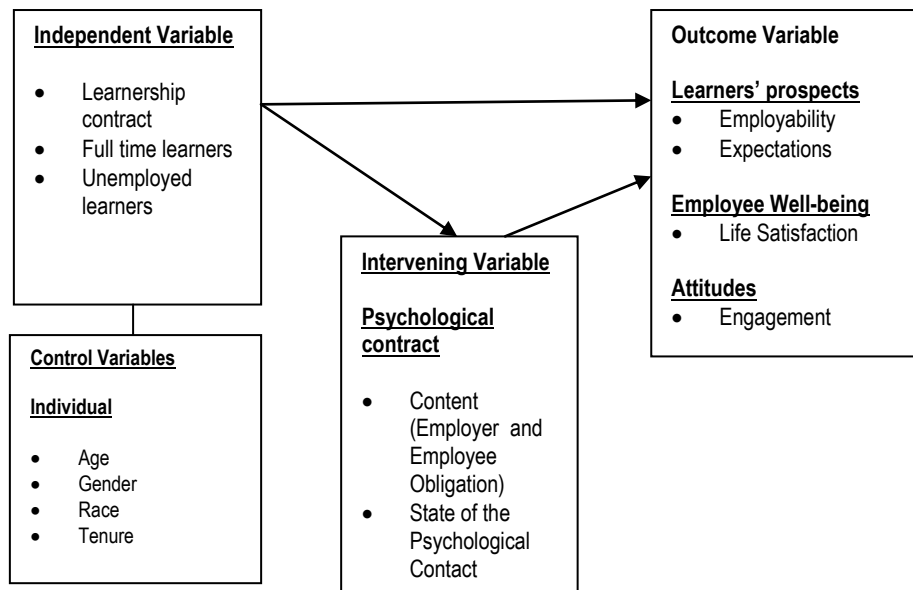


Figure 1. Conceptual model that act as guideline for the content of this research.

1.4 RESEARCH METHOD

1.4.1 Literature study

A complete review regarding the following is done: the state of the psychological contract, the forces thereof, the factors comprising the state of the psychological contract, and the state of the psychological contract experience. The literature reviews focus on research indications as to the factors relating to psychological contracts, violation of the psychological contract, learners' expectations, employability, life satisfaction and work engagement. The sources consulted to trace good information on these constructs include: internet, emerald, library catalogues, newspapers, academic books, scientific articles, published master's studies and theses.

1.4.2 Empirical study

1.4.2.1 Research design

The research is conducted within the quantitative paradigm. The quantitative method explains the proof of the theory by measuring variables to construct numerical outcomes (Fields, 2013). A cross-sectional field study has been used. Collection of primary data took place and was used during the research. The data was analysed statistically by using the SPSS 21 programme (IBM Corporation, 2013).

1.4.2.2 Participants

Learners within learnerships employed in Process operations by the Chemical Industries in the Vaal Triangle and KwaZulu-Natal, Karbochem, South African Synthetic Oil Limited (SASOL) and South African Calcium Carbide (SACC) were identified to take part in the research. A convenient sample ($n = 270$) was selected of learners in learning programmes for a time period of 12 up to 18 months. There was a response rate of 87.8%.

The final research proposal was sent to the companies in order to grant permission. Thereafter, letters were forwarded to the Training assessors to inform them about the proposed study. A letter to the various training providers was drafted and then signed by the Site Managers in order to request permission to enter into the training providers' premises. Times on which to complete the research were decided on.

1.4.2.3 Measuring instruments

A **Biographic questionnaire** was utilised to gain information on learners concerning their gender, age, race and type of learnership.

The **Expectations Questionnaire**, as developed by Isaksson et al. (2003) for the measurement of learner expectations. These expectations are measured against 4-items within this questionnaire. Questions on this range from "I expect that I will have to leave here once my present employment contract with this organisation has run out" to "I have been promised a permanent contract with this organisation when my present learnership expires" (Isaksson et al., 2003). The questions were based on a 5-point scale varying from 1 (strongly disagree)

to 5 (strongly agree). Prior research obtained Cronbach alpha in Europe range from 0.74 to 0.91 (Isaksson et al., 2003).

The **Employability Questionnaire** of De Witte (2000) measured employability of individuals. The questionnaire was based on a 4-item scale measuring the variable *employability*. Questions include: "I am optimistic that I would find a job, if I looked for one" to "I could easily switch to another employer, if I wanted to?" (Isaksson et al., 2003). The questionnaire also appears to have adequate and consistent psychometric properties across the datasets in Europe where Cronbach alpha coefficient was obtained between 0.84 and 0.90 (Isaksson et al., 2003).

Psychological contract obligations of the employer and employee, state of the psychological contract and violations of the psychological contract were measured by means of the measurement instrument that was developed by members of the research team of the Psychological Contract across Nations (PSYCONES). The **Employer Obligations Questionnaire** focuses on the promises and obligations made from time to time by employees' to their employer. The Employer Obligations Questionnaire exists of 15 items. The choice of questions within this questionnaire range from "Has your organisation promised or committed itself to provide you with interesting work?" to "Has your organisation promised or committed itself to help you deal with problems you encounter outside work?" (Isaksson et al., 2003). The questions are arranged according to a 6-point scale varying from 0 (No) to 5 (Yes, and promise fully kept). In a study conducted in South Africa the following Cronbach's alpha coefficient was obtained 0.93 by Keyser (2010); and 0.95 by De Beer (2011), this is an indication of the internal reliability of this questionnaire.

The **Employee Obligations Questionnaire** focuses on the promises and obligations made from time to time by employees' to their employer. This is a 16 item survey. An example of questions in this questionnaire differ from "Have you promised or committed yourself to go to work even if you don't feel particularly well?" to "Have you promised or committed yourself to work enthusiastically on jobs you would prefer not to be doing?"

The questions was arranged according to a 6-point frequency-rating scale vary from 0 (No) and to 5 (Yes, the entire promise was kept). In research done by De Beer (2011), the Cronbach alpha coefficient was 0.94.

The **State of the Psychological Contract** consists of 7 items. Replies were given on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (not at all) to 5 (totally). It includes questions such as "Do you feel you are rewarded fairly for the amount of work you put into your job?" and "Do you feel you are fairly paid for the work you do?" South African studies by Yazbek (2009) obtained a Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0.86, and De Beer (2011) obtained a Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0.85.

The **Violations of obligations** was measured by the Psychological Contract Questionnaire, as developed by Isaksson et al. (2003). The questions focus on six feelings of employees (happy, angry, pleased, violated, disappointed and grateful). The questionnaire comprises of 6 items as rated on a 5-point scale, ranging from 1 (strongly agree) to 5 (strongly disagree).

The **Life Satisfaction Scale** by Guest and Conway (2000) was used to do the measuring on employee life satisfaction. The life satisfaction scale applies a 7-point frequency scale ranging from 1 (Very dissatisfied) to 7 (Very satisfied). The questions ranged from "How satisfied do you currently feel about your life in general" to "How satisfied do you currently feel about the financial situation of your household?" (Guest & Conway, 2000). According to the Cronbach alpha coefficient acquired in Europe the range was between 0.80 and 0.86.

The **Utrecht Work Engagement Scale** (UWES) of Schaufeli, Salanova, González-Romá, and Bakker (2002, p. 71-92) was used to measure employee work engagement. The UWES has three scales, namely vigour (six items), dedication (five items), and absorption samples of items relating to the three dimensions, being the following: "I am bursting with energy in my job" (vigour); "I find my work full of meaning and purpose" (dedication); and "When I am working, I forget everything around me" (absorption). According to several studies Schaufeli, Salanova, González-Romá and Bakker, (2002, p.71-92) and Storm (2002) the range of the alpha coefficients found was between 0.68 and 0.91. The UWES uses a six-point frequency scale ranging from 0 (never) to 6 (always).

1.4.2.4 Statistical analysis

The SPSS 21 programme (IBM Corporation, 2013) was applied to do statistical analysis through the application of the following methods: Descriptive statistics, for example means, standard deviation, skewness and kurtosis were used to analyse data. Not only statistics for significant testing should be used, but also those elements affected need to be recognised to test the relationship of the statistical significant.

The Cronbach alpha coefficient and Inter-item correlations coefficients are the methods used in the determination of validity and reliability of the measuring instruments (Clark & Watson, 1995). The construct of the measurement instrument was done through a key element analysis. The two measuring instruments used to determine how many factors were involved in the analysis of the study were Eigen values and scree-plot.

The Pearson's *product moment correlation* coefficient was used to indicate the affiliation between variables (levels of Statistical significance = $p < 0.05$; a cut-off point of 0.30 represents a medium effect and a cut-off of 0.50 represents a large effect) (Cohen, Cohen, West & Aiken, 2003). The use of statistical significance testing is criticised by Steyn (2009), who suggested the effect sizes to be established to verify the significance of a statistically important kinship.

The traits certain groups possess are determined by dependent variables. The percentage of a dependant variable is determined by applying a multi-regression analysis that can be predicted by the independent variables. All individuals have different characteristics which are influential in the psychological contract. If a dependant variable plays no role as a determining factor in a statistical process, Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) should not be used.

Separate ANOVA's can be programmed and divided each variable separately, to provide a single outcome measure. If there is a correlation between variables that are used and the range is 1.00, the assumption can be made that the same item is being measured and it can be seen as redundant. Only one ANOVA can be computed for a single variable. One can determine the correlation between or among the independent variables by using analysis if the factorial design is zero. When MANOVA was used and the effect was significant,

ANOVA was used to determine which variable would be affected, and relationship would be analysed for practical significance.

ANOVA can be described as procedures that can be used to compare different sample means in order to determine whether sufficient evidence exists to establish whether the means of the people analysed is determined. ANOVA is developed to address research questions that determine dependant variables.

The Cohen's benchmark method of research is used to evaluate the different sizes of effects. Some researchers used this research method as a strict method to evaluate certain effects. (Thompson, 2002a; 2002b).

Standard multiple regression analysis will be conducted. A regression analysis is utilised in establishing the percentage variance in the dependent variable that is predicted by the independent variables. As mentioned by Tabachnick and Fidell (2012) the relationship among an independent variable and a dependent variable reveal variance shared with the dependent variable. A number of the variance may be expected from other independent variables (Cohen, 1988).

1.4.2.5 Research procedure

The study commenced with a thorough literature study on the subject. Permission was requested from different companies with learners with headquarters in the Vaal Triangle and KwaZulu-Natal. Once permission had been obtained, assessors of learners were requested to give permission for their learners to partake in the study. A sample of 270 learners was used to complete the questionnaire. Only 237 participants completed the questionnaire. Thereafter, the data analysis took place and results will be reported in the form a two research articles.

1.5. ETHICAL CONSIDERATION

Learners within the Chemical Industries in the Vaal Triangle and KwaZulu-Natal, Karbochem, SASOL and SACC were identified to take part in the research. The sourcing of permission from different companies with learners was done in the Vaal Triangle and KwaZulu-Natal.

In order to obtain permission from the Site Managers to do a study on the various premises as well as obtaining permission to enter the premises, a letter has been drafted including the final research proposal, in order to explain the purpose of the study. After receipt of approval letters were drafted to the Training assessors to inform them of the study, and get their buy-in. The sourcing of permission from different companies with learners was being done in the Vaal Triangle and KwaZulu-Natal. Upon this permission being granted, assessors of these learners were requested to give permission so that these learners may partake in the study. A sample of 237 learners was used to complete the questionnaire. After completion, analysis of the data will take place, and results will be posted in the form of two research articles.

Upon this permission being granted, assessors of these learners were requested to give permission for these learners to partake in the study. The completion of the questionnaire was on a voluntary base. It was also explained to the participants that answering of the questionnaire will also be anonymous to further create a secure milieu for participants. In each questionnaire a letter of consent was attached securing that results would be handled confidential and anonymous. Participants will receive feedback on the response of the research.

1.6 CHAPTER DIVISION

The chapters in this dissertation are presented as follows:

Chapter 1: Introduction and problem statement.

Chapter 2: Research article 1: The psychological contract, violation of the psychological contract, learners' expectations, employability, life satisfaction, work engagement and individual variables.

Chapter 3: Research article 2: The relationship between learner psychological contracts, violation of the psychological contract, learners' expectations, employability, work engagement and life satisfaction.

Chapter 4: Conclusions, limitations and recommendations.

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CHAPTER 2

ARTICLE 1

This article is in press:

Swanepoel, F. J. P. & Keyser, E. (in press). The psychological contract, violation of the psychological contract, learners' expectations, employability, life satisfaction, work engagement and individual variables. *Procedia-Social and Behavioural Sciences*.

**THE PSYCHOLOGICAL CONTRACT, VIOLATION OF THE PSYCHOLOGICAL
CONTRACT, LEARNERS' EXPECTATIONS, EMPLOYABILITY, LIFE
SATISFACTION, WORK ENGAGEMENT AND INDIVIDUAL VARIABLES**

ABSTRACT

The main aim of this article was to determine the expectation of learners in learnership differences in the levels of the psychological contracts, violation of the psychological contract, learners' expectations, employability, life satisfaction and work engagement between biographical variables (type of learnership contracts, gender, race, age, date of commencement of learnership, date of completion of learnership). A cross-sectional survey design was used. A total of 237 learners completed the questionnaire. The psychological contract scale, violation of the psychological contract scale, learners' expectations scale, employability scale, life satisfaction scale, work engagement scale, and biographical scale were administered. The results indicated a statistically significant difference for age, date of commencement of learnership, and date of completion of learnership, but no relationship with type of learnership contract, gender, or race.

INTRODUCTION AND PROBLEM STATEMENT

The chemical industry in South Africa is the biggest of its kind on the African mainland. It is complicated and diverse, with final products composited of chemical raw materials blended through various chemical operation processes. (CHIETA, 2011). According to Becker (1992), human capital theory focuses on current time and money invested in employees' education, training and development that could lead to a higher return on investment for the shareholders and company. Also, individuals who invest in their own skills development do so in the belief of higher salaries in the future and expect extended employment contracts to follow.

Training and development have become critical for employee's employability and marketability, through the constant development and improvement of skills and knowledge. Organisations play a huge role in the development of their employees and in adapting to new developments such as ever-changing technology (Tomlinson, 2002). Employees prefer being employed through companies that promote career opportunities by training programmes for career developing, which are new skills that are learnt and sharpened (Cataldo, Van Assen & Alessandro, 2000; Jiang & Klein, 1999).

The South African Department of Labour (2004) conducted a study that gave a number of shortfalls of skilled individuals on the semi-professional level. It was then predicted that the shortage would have to be met through employing skilled people from abroad to work in South Africa. The existing problem within the South African labour market is that the current skill levels of individuals are not compatible with the skills required in the labour market. In order to address these deficiencies, the Skills Development Act No. 97 of 1998 was implemented (Putsoene, 2003). The responsibility to resolve the problem of skill shortages without delay was given to the Department of Labour and Sector of Education and Training Authority (SETA). The SETA for the Chemical Industry is the Chemicals Industries Education and Training Authority (CHIETA). Learnerships were set by the Skills Development Act of 1998 as a framework for adult learning in the workplace through an accredited training provider, as well as to ensure the relation between structured learning and years of service, and ensuring the acquisition of a nationally recognised qualification. Two types of learnerships currently exist: firstly, learnerships for permanent employees; and

secondly, learnerships for unemployed individuals (Canning & Lang, 2004; Davies & Farquharson, 2004; Payne, 2002).

The learnership system was implemented because there was a great need for more skilled individuals. Employees could get on-the-job training and be qualified within 12 to 18 months. All learnership programmes comprise theoretical, as well as practical training, and their skills will be of great advantage to the organisation due to the effort put into a learnership programme. The longer an individual is in a learnership programme, the more he or she becomes of use to the company - more than those starting fresh (Department of Labour, 2004). Therefore, it is important to look into the learnership programme duration for a learner as this could determine the amount of theoretical and practical training needed.

Individuals of the age group between 45 years and older are of high value to a company due to their acquired knowledge and skills, and it is important that they are encouraged to remain in their current employment relationship (Ferrier, Burke & Smith, 2008). More importantly, this article considers the diverse nature of a labour force and skills development within the chemical industry. As mentioned by Considine (2001), the full-time labour market, particularly regarding the youth, has collapsed and the participation rate of females has significantly increased.

As there is a perception that there is a lesser need for older employees to be developed, companies tend to lessen emphasis on the excellence of training for these employees. However, in contrast to this perception, it is important for older employees to develop their skills in order to emerge with more variable career paths and to enter another state with accumulated skills. (Colquitt, LePine & Noe, 2000). Finally, a cohesive effect is expected to convince the substance that young employees attach to development as a means to guaranteed employability.

At the CHIETA Conference in 1995 Doctor Raymond Patel (CEO of the CHIETA) stated that employability skills are those “that are required not only to gain employment, but also to progress within an enterprise so as to achieve one’s potential and contribute successfully to enterprise strategic directions” (Marock, 2008, p. 5). Furthermore, it is important to understand employability in terms of the context of where the individual is located (Marock, 2008). Smith, Jennings and Solanki (2005) explained that learnership programs offer

guidance to new entrants that need to develop their acquired knowledge in order to obtain the necessary skills to become employable.

Employers are obliged to employ a learner and provide him or her with practical work experience for the defined period. Opportunities will be made available for the learner to attend off-the-job education and training interventions. The learner will work in return for the employer and avail him-/herself to attend any education/training programmes specified (Mummenthey, 2008). Therefore, individuals trained in a chemical learnership can be employable at any chemical industry because, within a company's skills development programme, the company can indicate how many learners will be appointed within each learnership programme.

From the above-mentioned, one may raise the questions of whether the unemployed learners perceive that they will be employed within the chemical industry after having completed the learnership, or whether full-time employees within the learnership programme expect that they will receive promotion or that they will be more employable within the chemical industry. Hence, it is important for the focus within the chemical industry to be on the perceptions and expectations of *full-time employed* learners and *temporarily unemployed* learners and their expectations to be employed after the completion of learnership programmes. No previous research that focuses on learners' expectations within South Africa could be found. The closest study was on MBA students' expectations after completion of their studies. The psychological contract has become an important aspect in human resource management, employment relations, and organisational psychological literature. Surprisingly, the psychological contract does not play a major role in research done with apprentices and trainees on a large scale (Smith, 2000).

The psychological contract consists of a set of mutual expectations, promises, and obligations between the employer and employee. Meeting of promises and obligations will depend on the involved parties that will also determine the development of a trust relationship, which refers to the state of the contract (Stoner & Gallagher, 2010). The following two questions can be posed: Firstly, what do learners believe they should receive because of perceived promises made by their employer (verbally or in written form)? Secondly, is the experience of the state of the psychological contract within a learnership similar between unemployed learners and employed learners?

When the employee and employer perceive violation of the psychological contract, distrust and dissatisfaction could cause the relationship to be damaged and this could possibly lead to the dissolution of the relationship (Robinson & Rousseau, 1994). Robinson and Morrison explains violation of the psychological contract as “the emotional and attitudinal state that may, under certain conditions, follow from the belief that one's employer failed to adequately maintain the psychological contract” (2000, pp. 525-546).

A contravention of the psychological contract may have an adverse impact, not only on consequences such as turnover and grievances, but also on security and satisfaction of employees, which can result in reduced organisational commitment (Rousseau, 2011). The implications for individuals are that they may interpret the terms and conditions of an agreement differently from what the employers intended, which could lead to a dispute, conflict of interest, and dissatisfaction, and this may have an undesirable effect on life and job satisfaction.

Different international researchers and authors emphasize that clearer expectations between the learner and the apprenticeship employer could assist in increasing satisfaction in their life and reducing attrition. Expectations in traineeships, as opposed to apprenticeships, have by no means been researched in a scholarly manner (Sadler-Smith & Smith, 2004; Symons & Simons, 2000).

The remedy for learners' experience of the psychological contract contravention is the understanding of the various contributing factors to that negative experience. Once the contributing factors are identified, it will promote the positive experience of employees that will build on their experiences and duplicate them in similar organisational situations (Heller, Judge, & Watson, 2002). The question that can be posed is whether learners who experience violation also have higher negative outcomes than those who do not?

Life satisfaction plays a role in positive human behaviour and can be defined as individuals' psychological well-being evaluated by their mood status, social interaction and goal achievement, self-concept, and self-perception to cope with everyday life (Bakker, Schaufeli, Leiter & Taris, 2008). Therefore one may ask: What is the relationship between psychological contracts, violation of the psychological contract, learners' expectations, learners' employability, and learners' life satisfaction? Furthermore, “Do unemployed and full-time employees within learnerships experience the psychological contract, violation of

the psychological contract, learners' expectations, employability, and life satisfaction differently”?

A connection exists between satisfaction with life and well-being: people who experience greater satisfaction with life also have higher ratings of well-being (Campbell, Converse & Rodgers, 2002). Life satisfaction, which is one of three indicators of well-being (positive affect and negative affect being the other two), is an overall assessment of feelings and attitudes about one's life at a particular moment in time, ranging from negative to positive (Beutell, 2006). Empirical results propose that life satisfaction is in fact reciprocally related for employees, but is this true for learners in learnerships?

The trust relationship between management, supervisors, and employees is a contributing factor in developing and maintaining the level of work engagement of employees (Chughtai & Buckley, 2008). The only research found concerning the psychological contract that also incorporated work engagement, were those of McInnis (2012), and Parzefall and Hakanen (2010). This leads to the assumption that the relationship between the psychological contract and work engagement could be investigated.

The mutual reliance in the employment relationship offers a crucial means for an employee's commitment to the work situation, which can be stated in terms of work engagement and its antecedent of sociology exchange theory (Parzefall & Hakanen, 2010). An employee has the need to trust the employer in order to develop a successful working relationship. The researcher's opinion is that resources such as training and developing “learners” or employees through learnerships will encourage learners to engage greater.

This study will contribute to information regarding learners' psychological contract, violation of the psychological contract of learners, expectations of learners, employability, and life satisfaction. Information on learners is limited in South Africa and a limited amount of documentation of similar information exists. It will also shed more light on life satisfaction of learners, providing companies with more information on learnership regarding information on the psychological contract, violation of the psychological contract of learners, expectations of learners, employability, and life satisfaction.

The Psychological Contract

Rousseau and McLean Parks (1993) view the psychological contract as the expectation held by employees about the nature of their trade within the organisation. This reflects the employees' subjective view of equality that is expected to have a great impact from the organisation that is comparative to one's investments or inputs (Anderson & Schalk, 1998). According to Büssing (1999) uncertainty has a negative effect on contract employees because if they are unsure about their future, it will affect their performance and their drive to succeed in the organisation.

The psychological contract helps to explain the dynamics of individual-organisation interaction (Campion, Medsker & Higgs, 1993). Individuals' created psychological contracts are based on their expectations and communications with their employers (Bao, Olson, Parayitam & Zhao, 2011). When individual expectations are based on perceived implicit or explicit promises made by the organisation, a psychological contract is formed. The term 'met expectations' describes a range of perceptions, including work experience after commencing employment with an organisation, as well as post-entry preferences (Bottger, 1990). It distinguishes between pre-entry expectations and post-entry experiences (Major, Kozlowski, Chao & Gardner, 1995), as well as the interface between the concepts (Irving & Meyer, 1994). Porter and Steers (1973) explain 'met expectations' as differences that are experienced positively or negatively by a person on the job and what he expected to receive.

Each individual has his or her own expectations of what he or she should receive from his or her employer through perceived promises made during the formulation of the employment contract (Grobler, Warnich, Carrell, Elbert & Hatfield, 2006). Therefore, a psychological contract forms the foundation of the employment relationship between employers and the employees and can lead to expectations or promises that have to be conveyed clearly. According to the psychological contract, only implicit or explicit promises are expected to be conveyed.

Expectations, promises, and obligations are the most important factors within the relationship for both sides. This is highlighted by Rousseau's (1995) cognitive-perceptual definition that the employee expects to be employed and the employer needs exceptional performance. According to social theory psychology, social perspectives can be described as social change

and stability where two persons have expectations of each other to fulfil a specific role within that relationship (Blau, 1964). Rousseau (1995) goes on to say that the key issues include the belief that a promise has actually been made by a certain party (employer) to the focal person (employee). In return, the party has offered a consideration in exchange to the focal person. This basis of reciprocal exchange binds the parties to a certain set of obligations.

It is of utmost importance that the psychological contract is never violated because negative energy will develop within the employee-employer relationship. A promise was made to receive a service where trust then developed and expectations or beliefs existed that one will be rewarded accordingly (Argyris, 1960; Rousseau, 1989). In contradiction with the content of the psychological contract that is referred to as a set of mutual promises and obligations, the state of the psychological contract is in relation to whether the promises and obligations are being kept and have been fulfilled; this has implications within a trust relationship (Stoner & Gallagher, 2010).

According to Coyle-Shapiro and Kessler (2000) a result of studies has been that the expectations of employees are unfulfilled due to the differences in perception between the employer and employee with regard to what the expectations are. Employees' expectations remain unfulfilled in terms of training and involvement in decision-making. The suggestion by Guest, Conway, Briner and Dickman (1996) is that temporary employee's appear to take the future into consideration with career prospects. Evidence supports this notion that training and development are viewed as crucial to be competent within a job. Therefore, it is clear that job-related training is a critical factor.

Chang (1999) stated that training opportunities provided by the organisation could influence the psychological state of individuals. As soon as employees experience an opportunity to develop their skills due to the company being apprehensive in recuperating their skills and ability, this could lead to retention of employees within the company. When the skills and knowledge is perceived as organisation-specific skills, employees will become more committed in improving their skills. Paré, Tremblay and Lalonde (2001) found training to be negatively related to the continuance of commitment.

Employees that have realised the value of the skills gained by their training will develop a sense of obligation towards the organisation; this will lead to retention within the organisation at least long enough to provide a return on investment. When employees feel

obligated towards the company as a result of training received, their performance levels increase and they become more dedicated (McElroy, 2001). On the other hand, when employees feel they receive irrelevant training that is not based on their needs, they tend to lose interest and experience lower work engagement levels (Lesabe & Nkosi, 2007). Hence, it is important to look at learners' experiences of training and levels of work engagement.

Freese and Schalk (1996) found that when looking at psychological contracts, *age* is also an important factor to take cognisance of. Their research highlighted that there is a difference in the expectation between younger and older employees: younger employees expected motivating work, training events, and a good social environment, whereas older employees expected managerial tasks, good salary, and job security (Freese, 2007). To date, the probability of differences within psychological contracts due to gender has not received ample attention. Although gender-based research has reported variations in the perception of incentives (Scandura & Lankau, 1997) and evaluations (Freese & Schalk, 1996), a lack of understanding of these differences is obvious; for instance, in a related study of workplace expectations, Freese and Schalk (1996) found that compared to men, women were more likely to be disappointed with personal development opportunities provided by their organisations. Due to the increasing participation of women in the workforce, values and expectations of the organisation have changed (Smith, 2001).

Within the chemical industry it is important to focus on the perceptions and expectations of learners within learnership programmes. These learners can be full-time employees within a chemical company or unemployed learners. People trained in a chemical learnership could be employed in any chemical industry. After completion of the learnership, unemployed learners may expect to be employed within the chemical industry or full-time employees may expect to receive promotion or be more employable in the chemical industry. The qualification relates to the same as an artisan, meaning it is a full qualification, and the person will only need to get to know the environment and the specific plant after obtaining the qualification within a chemical learnership on NQF level 4. Although people enrolling for this learnership must have matric with mathematics and science, many employees with chemical diplomas and degrees also need to do NQF 4 Chemical Operations to make them more familiar with the chemical industry. No previous study on the psychological contract of learners could be found. A previous study in South Africa on the psychological contract exclusively focused on

the development of managers who had enrolled for MBA studies and not on learners (Jeffery, 2010).

Learnerships

The Skills Development Act 97 of 1998 introduced learnerships for the first time in South Africa. Although developed based on the custom of apprenticeships, and therefore part of the first OECD category, some important differences are evident. Learnerships could be applied to any occupation, whereas apprenticeships mainly apply to selected trades.

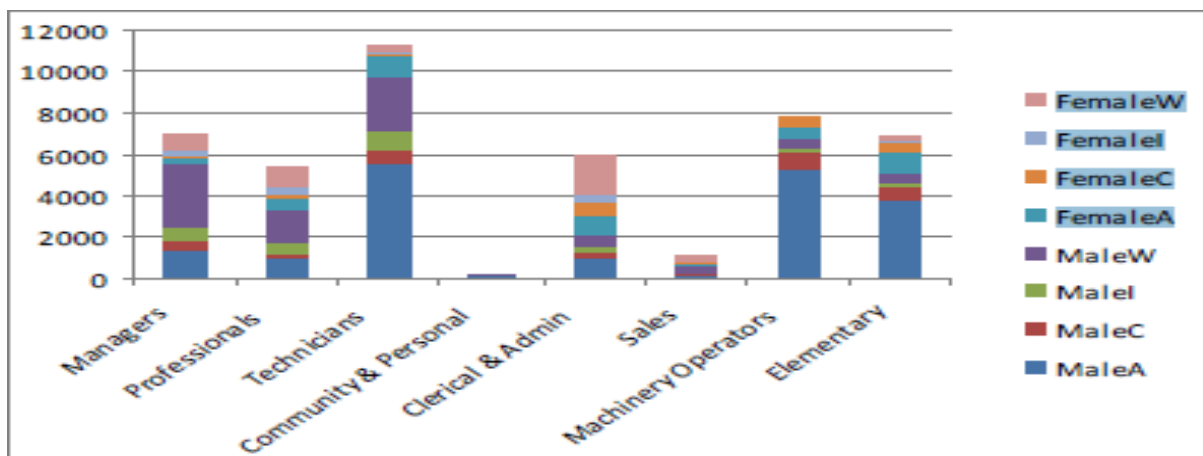
The government expects to expand workplace training drastically within South Africa through the learnership system. Learnerships are seen as essential to improve the quality of training and education, and as better preparation for learners to enter the workplace. Through relevant skills development and entrepreneurial training, learnerships are intended to enhance learners' opportunities of either securing employment in formal jobs or of formulating a basis for self-employment (Badroodien, 2005).

Paterson, McGrath, and Badroodien (2004) stated that there has been a slight increase in the admission of women for training in South Africa since the turn of the century. Despite the increase in participation rates, female employment is still far below the gender equity target. For the variant in the profile of female access across organisation size, there is the largest differential and poorest performance in training access for women in large organisations, while it appears that in small enterprise training practices, females are being slightly advantaged (Paterson, Paterson, McGrath, 2004).

Diagram 1 illustrates that female employees still receive less training in the technical, craft, and skill trade occupational categories than in more conventionally female occupations such as service providing and sales work. In spite of this difference in provided training, it has been proven that some progress has been made in readdressing the imbalances of the past as far as the skills levels of disadvantaged groups are concerned (Badroodien, 2005).

Diagram 1

Profile of learners within CHIETA



Adapted from CHIETA; five-year sector skills plan for the Chemical Industries Sector Education and Training Authority 2011 – 2016

CHIETA's five-year Sector Skills Plan provided the statistical information submitted by employers on the Workplace Skills Plan for the year ending 2011. The number of unemployed learners trained within the chemical sector was calculated to be 13,513 from the total number of the unemployed learners and 419 are engaged in tertiary qualifications, which is a significant proportion (13%) of the total (excluding the SASOL in-house trainees). With relation to equity, the sector is very much dominated by men, with 69% of employees being male and only 31% female.

However, while there are fewer female employees in the sector, their occupational breakdown is skewed towards the higher skilled occupations. The highest percentage of female employees can be found in the clerical and support occupations (21%), but surprisingly, 55% of all females in the sector are Managers, Professionals or Technician/Associated Professionals. In terms of race, 49% of the sector is African followed by Whites, Coloureds and Indians totalling the balance of the workforce with 30%, 11%, and 9% respectively. While the total numbers of Africans make up half the workforce, the majority of those employees' are within the lower skilled occupations, with their white counterparts fulfilling similar positions in the high skilled occupations. Technicians/Associate Professionals is the one area with positive transformation that almost entirely reflects the

profile of the sector. There is an age distribution within the sector with 40% of employees being younger than 35 years old, 50% aged between 35 and 55 and 10% over 55. However, only 8% of employees are under the age of 25. In a previous study, the artisan-dominated occupational groups of Craft and Related Employees and Plant and Machine Operators, only 7-8% of employees were younger than 25 (CHIETA, 2011).

Table 1

Training for the unemployed by subsector and type

Subsector	In-house training	National certificates	Nated 1-3	Nated 4-8	Bachelor degree	Master's degree	Doctoral	Other	Total
Base Chemicals	-	12	211	95	80	1	-	-	399
Explosives	-	-	17	11	5	-	-	-	33
Fertilisers	-	1 001	5	7	40	-	-	14	1 067
FMCG	-	215	200	27	2	-	-	22	466
Glass	-	-	13	46	3	-	-	2	64
Petroleum	10 345*	25	43	44	128	-	-	104	10 689
Pharmaceuticals	-	26	58	27	121	12	1	5	250
Speciality Chemicals	-	68	116	107	23	-	-	49	363
Surface Coatings	-	-	15	46	3	-	-	118	182
Grand Total	10 345	1 347	678	410	405	13	1	314	13 513

Adapted from CHIETA (2011)

From the above it is clear that individual characteristics of learners are important; therefore in this study the researcher will focus on the individual differences of learners within learnership agreements.

Employability

Since the 1990s, employability has been in the spotlight (Forrier & Sels, 2003). The historical antecedents of the current debate can be traced back for almost a century (McQuaid & Lindsay, 2005). Employability is defined as the individual perspective that is profuse (Forrier

& Sels, 2003; McArdle, Waters, Briscoe, & Hall, 2007; McQuaid & Lindsay, 2005; Rothwell & Arnold, 2007), accentuating career facets such as fulfilment (Fugate, Kinicki, & Ashforth, 2004), mobility (Van Dam, 2005), career development (Sterns & Dorsett, 1994), occupational expertise (Van der Heijde & Van der Heijden, 2006), personal development, and life-long learning (Bezuijen, 2005; Hillage & Pollard, 1998; Rothwell & Arnold, 2007).

Gracia, Ramos, Peiró, Caballer, and Sora (2011) mentioned that there are no lifetime employment guarantees within the same organisation and that “lifetime employment” has been proposed as the new labour market protection. Throughout an individual’s career growth and development, knowledge, skills, and abilities occur, which are the most important factors that an employee should have to indicate employability. The employee’s career potential, which are inclusive in the factors to employability, will lead to acceptance of the employee as employable within the labour market (Fugate & Kinicki, 2008; Fugate, Kinicki, & Ashforth, 2004; Van der Heijde & Van der Heijden, 2006).

Research done by Forrier and Sels (2003) stated that an employee sees employment as an active task and their responsibility is to search for a job and new opportunities that will improve their career, which could lead to employability. The aim of further research, as conducted by Berntson, Sverke, & Marklund (2006, p. 223-244), was to detect factors that impact on employability. This research found that within the paradigm of employability, certain contextual factors, such as the state of the local labour markets and various elements that influence the business cycle, also contribute to employability.

Conceptualisation of employability can be done from three different perspectives, namely the economic-social, the employee, and the organisation (Van Dam, Van der Heijden, & Schyns, 2006). McQuaid and Lindsay (2005) stated that within the *economic-social perspective*, employability can be referred to as the various employees that can sustain a job and can differentiate between the employable and unemployable individuals. In this study the economic-social perspective plays an important role because of the focus on the employability of learners and whether they feel more employable because of the completion of learnerships. The economic-social perspective also covers interventions set by the government aimed at encouraging unemployed individuals to enter the labour market (Forrier & Sels, 2003).

According to the National Skills Development Strategy (NSDS) (2011), one of the most important national targets set by the government is the utilisation of learnerships to get unemployed people skilled to encourage employability through the skills and knowledge gained by means of the learnership. Such a learnership qualification will enable people to get employment within the chemical industry, as it is seen in the same skills type as an artisanship (NSDS, 2011).

Employability has been addressed from an *economic-social and individual perspective* by different researchers and authors (Fugate & Kinicki, 2008; Scholarios et al., 2008; Van der Heijden, De Lange, Demerouti & Van der Heijde, 2009), and also from an *organisational perspective* (Guest, 1987). Employability from the latter perspective has been linked to the functional flexibility of organisations and it represents an Employment/Human Resource practice that could optimise the deployment of employees. This could be done through the knowledge and skills gained during the learnership training, as well as through the flexibility of the learner's application due to the broadness of skills and knowledge obtained on plant operations (Nauta, Van Vianen, Van Der Heijden, Van Dam & Willemsen, 2009).

The individual is more focused on the character and behaviour of the person during the learnership training process (Forrier & Sels, 2003; Fugate et al., 2004; Fugate & Kinicki, 2008). It is thus important to take individual characteristics, such as adaptability, career development, knowledge, skills, personal development, and lifelong learning into account when appointing from a learnership.

Employability is a multi-dimensional concept and the need exists to differentiate between skills and knowledge relevant to obtain a job, as well as other related factors with relevance to the preparation for work (Little, 2001). The psychological contract has become part of employability and is a characteristic of career employment (Guest, 2004). Instead of being “a nuance in a more conditional employment relationship” as predicted by Pascale (1995), it continues to be promoted to a large extent in the career literature as the norm towards which individuals and organisations should aim (Baruch, 2001, 2003, 2004; Fugate et al., 2004; King, 2004). The learnership contract can be perceived as beneficial to employees because they get the opportunity to become employable and become successful in their careers.

An individual that is employable should be seen as competent and able to provide a service to the best of his or her ability. Short term and casual employment has increased along the years

and has become a basis of employment to the younger generation. This way of work has become a norm and is part of a manner in which one can gain experience and build on one's career (Clarke & Patrickson, 2008).

As a result of the changing world of work, employees must focus on their flexibility and employability to have a competitive edge in the corporate world. New employment can only be obtained through flexibility, which are the diverse skills acquired to have a good level of employment (Anderson & Schalk, 1998; Berner, 1999; Bernhard, 2001; Gasperz & Ott, 1996; Hall & Moss, 1998; Huiskamp & Schalk, 2002). Anderson and Schalk (1998) suggest that exchange and upcoming employability are replacing the conventional employability (security, loyalty).

The government has implemented programmes that will ensure that individuals acquire the needed skills and all individuals should utilise these programmes to their advantage. This is where the two concepts, psychological contract and employability, are linked (De Jong & Schalk, 2003). Different authors and researchers studied the relationship between the psychological contract and employability (Brink, Hartog, Koopman & Van Muijen, 2002; Guest & Conway, 1997). It was found that violation of the psychological contract is negatively related to employability (Guest & Conway, 1997). However, if the employees feel more employable and the psychological contract is not violated, a positive relationship exists between the potential development and internal mobility of an employee (Ten Brink et al., 2002).

Employees have a set of goals they want to achieve, which forms expectations they will expect from the employer to provide.. Once an individual has completed a learnership programme, which is not permanent, they have an expectation that they should receive a contract for permanent employment.

There exists a pessimistic association between age and employability based on organisational attitudes when older employees are considered (Garavan & Coolahan, 1996; Van der Heijden, 2002). Older employees are perceived as less employable due to the organisation's perception that they have a negative attitude towards learning and development and reject change, which could lead to poor work performance (Greller & Stroh, 1995; Patrickson & Ranzijn, 2003). Employees with longer tenure or who are considered older, experience discrimination in relation to organisationally sponsored training and development (Hall &

Mirvis, 1995). Although activities such as training and development will assist these employees in maintaining their employability, organisations are reluctant to invest in their development. This is because of organisation's perception that they will not receive any return on their investment and the belief that these employees have lost the capacity to learn and adapt. Organisations will not openly admit their reluctance, yet these unstated beliefs clearly have an impact on the continuing employment success of these employees.

Baruch (2001) stated that people above the age of 50 know that no amount of skills, experience, or competency could make them employable in comparison with younger employees who are believed to be more valuable and employable, despite their lack of experience. Younger employees, as mentioned by Bogdanowicz and Bailey (2002), are seen to be educated, smart, creative, and computer literate. They are also believed to have portable skills, which are highly valued by potential employers. The question that follows from this is whether age is the most important aspect when determining employability?

Research found a significant difference, related to gender, between basic and informational skills with female learners possessing more such skills than male learners. Mitchell (2001) disagrees with the outcome of this study by stating that there is a difference between female and male employees: females see their skills towards employability as more important than males who do not see it as important in order to become employable. This may vary from the research objective as it evaluates obtained levels, as well as the research by Mitchell (2001), who evaluated perception relating to employability skills. Researchers could not find a considerable difference between employability skills of students who attended experiential training and students who did not attend experiential training within the industry (Little, 2001).

Brown, Green and Lauder (1997) postulate that the employability of an individual is not only reflected by talent, effort, and the performance of individuals, but also reflected by individual characteristics such as socio-economic background, gender, religion, and race. Education is considered the most predominant factor that leads to employability, adequate levels of income, and satisfied psychological needs. Since education is closely related to income and career status, and the correlation between education and life satisfaction is either small or disappears totally when earnings and occupational status are statistically controlled, it is likely that education is mainly considered to be a way of ensuring sufficient levels of

employment and income, and eventually psychological needs can be satisfied (Kahneman, Diener & Schwarz, 2003; Worell, 2002).

Life satisfaction

Veenhoven (1991, pp. 7-26) describes life satisfaction as being “conceived as the degree to which an individual judges the overall quality of his life-as-a-whole favourably”. Martikainen (2008) define life satisfaction as the cognitive factor of prejudiced well-being. Bradley and Corwyn (2004) are in agreement with this definition. They stated that life satisfaction is determined by the manner in which basic needs can be fulfilled and the attainability of personal goals. From this perspective, it can be assumed that life satisfaction will be high if goals are achieved. Life satisfaction has an impact on the different domains of life (Diener, 2000; Diener, Suh, Lucas & Smith, 1999).

The demands of balancing work with family- and personal life are complex, but thoroughly researched (Voydanoff & Donnelly, 1999). Life satisfaction implies that an individual’s well-being is good (Karatepe, Kilic & Isiksel, 2008). A person’s quality of life is an indication of the personal well-being that can refer to the individual’s social, physical, and psychological state of wellness. Individual growth and development is very important; therefore it is important to maintain a healthy lifestyle (Johansson & Bernspång, 2003).

According to Diener et al. (1999), small but significant correlations between education and prejudiced well-being have often been found. The role of education in the well-being of employees should not be underestimated, as it influences development and goals that can be achieved. Individuals with high qualifications and income experience a high level of life satisfaction because they can achieve their goals more easily and are more optimistic about life and their expectations in general (Light, Hertsgaard & Martin, 1985).

People in temporary employment experience noticeably lower overall life satisfaction and happiness. According to the results, it is more than likely that, in contrast to having an employment contract with unlimited duration, having an employment contract with limited duration or having no employment contract at all will generally affect life satisfaction

negatively. *Gender and age* does not seem to influence or have an impact on life satisfaction (CHIETA, 2011).

Tait, Padgett, & Baldwin (1989) found that during the past decades, the relationship between work and life satisfaction has grown stronger for women since the extension of their roles within their work and career. Likewise, age is significantly positively related to life satisfaction. Age does play a role in life satisfaction because the needs of individuals change as they age. Marital status does not have a significant influence on life satisfaction, but this perception differs from individual to individual (Shirom, Westman & Melamed, 1999; Viljoen & Rothmann, 2009).

Longitudinal studies and cross-sectional comparisons of satisfaction levels indicate that there is a difference between employed and unemployed individuals' life satisfaction and that unemployment causes individuals to experience low levels of life satisfaction (Clark & Oswald, 1994; Winkelmann & Winkelmann, 1998).

In recent years, the relationship between unemployment and life satisfaction has been examined in more detail. To point out only a few, Clark (2006) analysed the consequences of unemployment duration and of unemployment rates of reference groups, for example at the local level. Forret and Dougherty (2004) stated that men and women experience unemployment differently and therefore different behaviours can be identified.

Frijns (2010) stated that life satisfaction is negatively affected by age regardless of the insertion of additional explanatory measures. The study also indicated that gender and marital status did not have an impact on life satisfaction and national wealth does have an effect on the relationship between education and well-being. Kahneman, Diener, and Schwartz (2003) conclude that according to an extensive literature review, the effect of education is also stronger for those within the lower income group and the unemployed.

Clark and Oswald (1994) stated that the result of being unemployed, at any conventional level, is statistically significant and negatively associated with well-being: an individual that is unemployed may have a low self-esteem as well as a reduced feeling that their life is under control. Employment has a positive influence on life satisfaction (Frey & Stutzer, 2000). Bouazzaoui and Mullet (2002) stated that employment is one of the conditions for satisfaction with life in Western societies.

Work Engagement

It is important to look at the individual characteristics of learners and their experience of life satisfaction. Parzefall and Hakanen (2010) stated that in work engagement and its antecedent of the sociology exchange theory, there is a mutual reliance in the employment relationship. The manager-employee relationship is the single most important factor that could determine employee work engagement, as managers are the organisation's representatives who create a connection with employees.

The manager-employee relationship can often lead to violation of the psychological contract due to distrust from either side. When employees trust managers, it seems that the employees are more proud of their organisation. This in turn causes them to feel that they are working toward individual success through their own talents, while, at the same time, it contributes to their talents in the workplace being developed and applied at all levels (Fegley, 2006).

Work engagement can be described as a state of well-being and fulfilment regarding work; a positive, rewarding, and emotional-motivational condition that can also be considered as cognitive, emotional, and behavioural. Work engagement includes characteristics like enthusiasm, dedication and absorption (Bakker, Schaufeli, Leiter & Taris, 2008; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004).

Mauno, Kinnunen and Ruokolainen (2007) stated that an employee that has this characteristic tends to strive for the best results and tackles any difficult task with persistence and determination. According to the researchers, enthusiasm in the workplace plays a huge part in employees' productivity. Vigour at work is motivating for employees in the sense of growth when difficult tasks have to be completed. Employees may also be provided with a clear sense of direction for their careers, which leads to motivation and encouragement to pursue their career goals. Definition of vigour can be a characteristic trait that gives energy and mental resilience during work activities.

Absorption, which is a dimension within work engagement, refers to the entire focus on and interest in an individual's work (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2003). This implies being entirely and happily immersed in one's work, to the level where the individual finds it difficult to disengage from it. This is the characteristic of an individual with a high score on absorption. The result can be that everything else elapses and time seems to fly. On the other hand,

individuals scoring low, do not feel engaged or immersed, neither do they have difficulties disengaging from work.

The significance of work engagement has positive returns for the employer. There appears to be a connection between satisfaction with life and work engagement, as people who experience more satisfaction with their lives also report greater experiences of work engagement (Oyedele, 2012). Three indicators of satisfaction with life have been identified. These are positive effects, negative effects, and a profuse general evaluation of emotions and attitudes about one's life at a specific time and the result could vary from negative to positive (Beutell, 2006).

Engaged individuals are motivated and willing to do more than is expected of them, with high levels of energy and enthusiasm about their work. These individuals are prepared to put the company's interest before their own (Macey & Schneider, 2008; Xanthopoulou, Bakker, Demerouti & Schaufeli, 2009). An employee has the need to be trusted and supported by the employer in order to develop a successful working relationship. The researcher's opinion is that resources such as training and developing "learners" or employees through learnerships will encourage learners to become more engaged.

METHOD

Research design

This study was conducted within the quantitative paradigm, where variables are measured by numerical means and thereby provides evidence for a theory (Field, 2013). A cross-sectional field study was used. The primary data was collected and used during the research, then the data was analysed statistically by using the SPSS 21 programme (IBM Corporation, 2013).

Participants

Learners within the chemical industries in the Vaal Triangle and KwaZulu-Natal - Karbochem, Sasol, and SACC - were identified to take part in the research. A convenient

sample (n = 270) of learners in learning programmes for a time period of 12 to 18 months was selected for participation in this survey.

The sourcing of permission from different companies with learners was done in the Vaal Triangle and KwaZulu-Natal. Upon this permission being granted, assessors of learners were requested to give permission for these learners to partake in the study. A total of 237 learners completed the questionnaire. After completion, analysis of the data took place, and results were posted in the form of two research articles.

Table 1 shows the individual characteristics of the studied population. It is indicated that few participants had permanent contracts (8.4%), 84.4% of the participants were male and 15.2% female. The majority of participants (40.9%) fell in the age group between 21 and 25 years and the majority (63.3%) of the studied population were enrolled for learnerships during 2011. Learnership completion is shown to have added up to 0.40%.

Table 2

Compilation of Study Population (N=237)

Item	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Learnership	Full-time employee within learnership (1)	20	8.4
	Unemployed learner within learnership (2)	122	51.5
	Missing response	95	40.1
	Total	237	100.0
Gender	Female (1)	36	15.2
	Male (2)	200	84.4
	Missing responses	1	0.4
	Total	237	100.0
Race	African	178	75.1
	Coloured	1	0.4
	Indian	5	2.1
	White	48	20.3
	Missing responses	5	2.1
	Total	237	100.0
Age	18 to 20 years	34	14.3
	21 to 25 years	97	40.9
	26 to 30 years	62	26.2
	31 to 35 years	19	8.0
	36 to 40 years	9	3.8
	41 to 60 years	7	3.0
	Missing responses	9	3.8
	Total	237	100.0

Learnership enrolment duration-Commence years	2005	2	0.8
	2008	2	0.8
	2009	27	11.4
	2010	29	12.2
	2011	150	63.3
	Missing responses	27	11.4
	Total	237	100.0
Learnership enrolment duration-Completion years	2007	1	0.4
	2008	1	0.4
	2009	2	0.8
	2010	3	0.13
	2011	47	19.8
Those who expected to complete in the future	2012	59	24.9
	2013	21	8.9
	2014	43	18.1
	Missing responses	60	25.3
	Total	237	100.0

Measuring instruments

A **biographic questionnaire** was utilised to gain information concerning learners with regard to their gender, age, race, and type of learnership.

The **Expectations Questionnaire** as develop by Isaksson et al. (2003) was used to measure learners' expectations. The questionnaire consists of 4 items. Questions range from "I expect that I will have to leave here once my present employment contract with this organisation has run out" to "I have been promised a permanent contract with this organisation when my present learnership expires" (Isaksson et al., 2003). The questions are arranged along a 5-point scale varying from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Previous studies indicate that Cronbach's Alpha in Europe ranged from 0.74 to 0.91 (Isaksson et al., 2003).

The **Employability Questionnaire** of De Witte (2000), consisting of a 4-item scale, was used to measure employability. Questions include: "I am optimistic that I would find a job, if I looked for one" and "I could easily switch to another employer, if I wanted to" (Isaksson et al., 2003). The questionnaire also appears to have adequate and consistent psychometric properties across the datasets in Europe where Cronbach's Alpha coefficients were obtained between 0.84 and 0.90 (Isaksson et al., 2003).

Psychological contract obligations of the employer and employee, state of the psychological contract, and violations of the psychological contract were measured by means of the measurement instrument developed by members of the research team of the Psychological Contract Across Nations (PSYCONES). The **Employer Obligations Questionnaire** measures possible promises and commitments sometimes made by employers to employees. The Employer Obligations Questionnaire consists of 15 items ranging from "Has your organisation promised or committed itself to provide you with interesting work?" to "Has your organisation promised or committed itself to help you deal with problems you encounter outside work?" (Isaksson et al., 2003). The questions could be answered on a 5-point scale varying from 0 (No) to 5 (Yes, and promise fully kept). In a study conducted in South Africa, the following Cronbach's Alpha coefficients were obtained: 0.93 (Keyser, 2010) and 0.95 (De Beer, 2011). The high Cronbach's Alpha coefficients indicate that this questionnaire has good internal consistency.

The **Employee Obligations Questionnaire** focuses on promises and commitments sometimes made by employees to employers. The 16 items of this questionnaire include the following questions: "Have you promised or committed yourself to go to work even if you don't feel particularly well?" and "Have you promised or committed yourself to work enthusiastically on jobs you would prefer not to be doing?" The questions are arranged along a 5-point frequency-rating scale varying from 0 (No) to 5 (Yes, fully kept promise). Research done by De Beer (2011) obtained a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.94.

The **State of the Psychological Contract Questionnaire** consists of 7 items. Answers were given on a 5-point Likert-scale ranging from 1 (not at all) to 5 (totally). There were questions such as "Do you feel you are rewarded fairly for the amount of work you put into your job?" and "Do you feel you are fairly paid for the work you do?" South African studies obtained a Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0.86 (Yazbek, 2009) and 0.85 (De Beer, 2011).

Psychological Contract Questionnaire, developed by Isaksson et al. (2003) measured the **violation of the psychological contract**. The questions focus on six feelings of employees (happy, angry, pleased, violated, disappointed, and grateful). The questionnaire consists of 6 items as rated on a 5-point scale, ranging from 1 (strongly agree) to 5 (strongly disagree).

The **Life Satisfaction Scale** by Guest and Conway (1998) was used to measure employee life satisfaction. The life satisfaction scale makes use of a 7-point frequency scale ranging from 1

(Very dissatisfied) to 7 (Very satisfied). The questions ranging from “How satisfied do you currently feel about your life in general” to “How satisfied do you currently feel about the financial situation of your household?” (Guest & Conway, 1998). Cronbach’s Alpha coefficients obtained in Europe ranged from 0.80 to 0.86.

Statistical analysis

The SPSS 21 programme (IBM Corporation, 2013) was used to conduct statistical analysis by using the following methods: Descriptive statistics, e.g. means, standard deviations, skewness, and kurtosis, were used to analyse data. Not only should statistics for significant testing be used, but also those elements that are affected should be recognized in order to test the relationship of statistical significance.

The Cronbach’s Alpha coefficient and inter-item correlation coefficients were the methods used to determine the validity and reliability of the measuring instruments (Clark & Watson, 1995). A key element analysis was conducted on the construct of the measuring instrument.

The Pearson’s product moment correlation coefficient was used to indicate the affiliation between variables (levels of statistical significance = $p < 0.05$; a cut-off point of 0.30 represents a medium effect and a cut-off of 0.50 represents a large effect) (Cohen, Cohen, West & Aiken, 2002). The use of statistical significance testing is criticised by Steyn (2009) and it is suggested that effect sizes be established to verify the significance of a statistically important relationship.

All individuals have different characteristics that are influential in a psychological contract. If a variable plays no role as a determining factor in a statistical process, Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) should not be used. Separate ANOVA’s can be programmed and divided into each variable separately, to provide a single outcome measure. If there is a correlation between variables used and the range is 1.00, the assumption can be made that the same item is being measured and it can be seen as redundant. There can only be one ANOVA computed for a single variable. One can determine the correlation between or among the independent variables by using analysis if the factorial design is zero. When MANOVA was used and the effect was significant, ANOVA was then used to determine which variable would be affected and the relationship would be analysed for practical significance.

ANOVA can be described as procedures that can be used to compare different sample means in order to determine whether there is sufficient evidence to establish whether the means of the population that is being analysed is determined. ANOVA is developed to address research questions that determine dependant variables.

Results

Descriptive Statistics and Correlations

The descriptive statistics, Cronbach's Alpha coefficients, and Pearson correlations are reported in Table 2. The Cronbach's Alpha coefficients of the scales were acceptable with the cut-off point of 0.70 (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994) except for expectations of learners ($\alpha = 0.67$), which was lower than 0.70.

Table 3

The descriptive statistics, alpha coefficient and Pearson correlations

Variable	Mean	SD	Range	Skewness	Kurtosis	α
Learners Expectations	12.12	2.87	15.00	-0.50	-0.38	0.67
Employer obligations	62.05	8.89	48.10	-1.54	2.99	0.91
Employee obligations	72.56	6.50	55.00	-2.11	11.27	0.86
Violation of the psychological contract	11.63	4.86	20.00	0.71	-0.29	0.81
State of the psychological contract	26.35	6.52	28.00	-0.63	-0.15	0.90
Employability	12.46	4.51	16.00	-0.01	-0.74	0.83
Life satisfaction	32.83	6.37	30.00	-0.91	0.65	0.81
Work Engagement	86.85	12.15	63.00	-1.19	1.64	0.92

Next, MANOVA (multivariate analysis of variance) was used to determine differences between personal variables of learners' expectations, employer obligations, employee obligations, state of psychological contract, and violation of the psychological contract, employability, and life satisfaction. Results were initially analysed for statistical importance using Wilks' Lambda statistics. ANOVA was used to establish definite differences whenever statistical differences were established. The results of the MANOVA analysis are depicted in Table 3.

Table 4

MANOVA – differences between learners' expectations, employer obligations, employee obligations, state of psychological contract, violation of psychological contract, employability and life satisfaction

Variable	Value	F	Df	p	Partial Eta Squared
Type of learnership contract	0.91	1.77	127.00	0.10	0.89
Gender	0.96	1.28	7.00	0.26	0.04
Race	0.91	0.95	21.00	0.52	0.03
Age	0.70	2.11	35.00	0.00*	0.07
Date of Commencement of learnership	0.66	2.87	28.00	0.00*	0.10
Date of Completion of learnership	0.54	2.01	49.00	0.00*	0.08

** p<0.05 = significant

In an analysis of Wilks' Lambda, values as seen in Table 3 indicated a statistically significant difference obtained for age, date of commencement of learnership, and date of completion of learnership, but no relationship was found with type of learnership contract, gender, or race. Tables 5, 6 and 7 Anova differences are discussed.

Table 5

ANOVAS – Differences in learners' age, learners' expectations, employer obligations, employee obligations, state of psychological contract, violation of psychological contract, employability and life satisfaction

Item	18-20 years	21-25 years	26-30 years	31-35 years	36-40 years	41-60 years	p	η^2
Learners' expectations	12.72	11.86	12.32	12.29	12.49	13.25	0.63	0.02
Employer obligations	65.53	62.24	60.80	60.98	62.81	52.44	0.02*	0.06
Employee obligations	74.72	71.74	71.76	72.14	72.29	73.56	0.37	0.03
State of the psychological contract	29.77	26.84	24.92	24.74	23.06	23.90	0.01*	0.07
Violation the of psychological contract	8.97	10.95	12.64	12.65	14.86	17.86	0.00*	0.14
Employability	11.35	11.59	13.84	12.74	12.86	14.00	0.05*	0.05
Life satisfaction	35.61	32.14	33.01	35.02	28.14	30.53	0.01*	0.07

$\eta^2 > 0,25$ = large effect

* Statistically significant difference: $p < 0,05$

As seen from Table 4, it seems that no statistical difference exists regarding age, learners' expectation, or employee obligations. A statistically significant difference was found regarding employer obligation, where learners between ages 18 and 20 years, and 41 and 60 years, experience employee obligations higher than do those between 21 and 40 years of age. Learners experience the state of the psychological contract higher between the ages 18 and 20 than do those between 36 and 40 years of age. Learners between ages 18 and 20 years experience violation of the psychological contract less than do those between 41 and 60 years of age. Learners between ages 41 and 60 years feel they are more employable than younger learners. Learners between ages 18 and 20 years experience life satisfaction as higher than those between ages 36 and 40 years.

Table 6

ANOVAS – Differences in Date of commencement of learnership, learners' expectations, employer obligations, employee obligations, state of psychological contract, violation of psychological contract, employability and life satisfaction

Variable	2005	2008	2009	2010	2011	p	η^2
Learners' expectation	12.12	11.06	11.66	11.97	12.53	0.72	0.03
Employer obligations	54.97	59.96	61.01	63.20	63.09	0.24	0.06
Employee obligations	72.50	72.61	72.45	72.70	73.02	0.61	0.03
State of the psychological contract	25.50	26.00	21.80	24.66	28.44	0.01*	0.11
Violation of the psychological contract	16.00	9.50	12.23	11.00	11.20	0.00*	0.19
Employability	9.00	9.50	15.00	10.69	11.96	0.00*	0.19
Life satisfaction	36.00	28.50	35.29	34.07	32.71	0.09	0.08

$\eta^2 > 0.25$ = large effect

*Statistically significant difference: $p < 0.05$

As seen in Table 5, a statistically significant relationship was found between the date of commencement of learnership, state of psychological contract, violation of the psychological contract, and employability. Regarding the state of the psychological contract, learners that commenced their learnership in 2009 had less state of psychological contract than those of 2011. Learners, who commenced their learnerships in 2008, felt less violation of the psychological contract by the employer than those who started in 2005. Those learners who commenced their learnerships in 2005 and 2008 felt less employable than those who started in 2009 up to 2011.

Table 7

ANOVAS – Differences in date of completion of learnership, learners' expectations, employer obligations, employee obligations, state of psychological contract, violation of psychological contract, employability and life satisfaction.

Variable	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	p	η^2
Learners' expectation	12.12	12.12	12.12	12.12	11.66	12.43	12.68	12.97	0.72	0.03
Employer obligations	62.05	62.05	62.05	62.05	58.77	62.84	63.55	64.81	0.24	0.06
Employee obligations	73.15	74.00	75.00	68.91	71.93	73.33	72.70	74.17	0.61	0.03
State of the psychological contract	23.00	33.00	27.50	17.33	25.01	26.96	26.05	29.35	0.01*	0.11
Violation the of psychological contract	12.00	7.00	11.00	9.00	14.67	10.34	9.75	9.55	0.00*	0.19
Employability	19.00	9.00	14.00	17.33	14.91	11.54	11.15	10.05	0.00*	0.19
Life satisfaction	37.00	38.00	33.00	38.52	30.55	34.31	33.90	33.21	0.09	0.08

$\eta^2 > 0.25$ = large effect

* Statistically significant difference: $p < 0.05$

Learners who completed their learnerships in 2010 experienced less state of the psychological contract than those who completed their learnerships in 2008. They also experienced less violation of their psychological contract than those who completed in 2011. Learners who completed their learnerships in 2008 and those who will complete the learnerships in 2014, experience less employability than other learners who completed in 2007 and 2010.

DISCUSSION

The aim of this article was to investigate the differences between the psychological contract, violations thereof, learners' expectations, employability, life satisfaction, individual variables of learners, and work engagement of learners within the chemical industry. The concepts, views and theory of social exchange are fundamental to psychological contract research.

Individuals (permanently employed or unemployed learners) in learnerships compare their beliefs if their promises and obligations are fulfilled, if the deal was fair, by the degree of trust in whether the relationship will continue in the future, and if they complete this learnership that they will be more employable in the future.

In this research, MANOVA was used to determine specific statistical differences. The results of the MANOVA analysis show statistically significant differences for age, date of commencement of learnership, and date of completion of the learnership, but no relationships were found with the type of learnership contract, gender, or race. Therefore, it seems that the employed and unemployed learners within learnerships experienced no differences. In a study in the chemical industry by Keyser (2010), no differences regarding psychological contract levels between groups with regard to type of contract (permanent or temporary employees) were found either.

A statistically significant difference was found regarding employer obligation where learners between ages 18 and 20 years and 41 and 60 years experience higher employee obligations. Learners experience the state of the psychological contract to a higher degree between ages 18 and 20 than do those between 36 and 40 years of age. Younger learners experience violation of the psychological contract less than do older learners. Older learners feel they are more employable than do younger learners. Learners between ages 18 and 20 years experience higher life satisfaction than do those between ages 36 and 40 years, because the needs of individuals change (Tait, Padgett and Baldwin (1989).

A statistically significant relationship was found between date of commencement of learnership, state of psychological contract, violation of the psychological contract, and employability. According to the state of the psychological contract, learners that commenced with learnership in 2009, experienced less state of psychological contract than those of 2011. Learners, who commenced learnerships in 2008, felt less violation of the psychological contract by the employer than those learners who commenced their learnership in 2005. Those learners who started with learnerships in 2005 and 2008 felt less employable than those who started in 2009 up to 2011. Learners who completed their learnerships in 2010 experienced less state of the psychological contract than those who completed their learnerships in 2008 and they also experienced less violation of their psychological contract than those who had completed in 2011.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In order to generalise the findings, further research on a larger sample of learners needs to be done. The recommendation is to use a larger population group representing the South African population on a national level, which will enhance generalisability. To determine inconsistencies between the diverse industries, as well as to generalise findings, more research is needed within other industries.

In upcoming research, the focus should be on demographical information, the psychological contract, and violation of the psychological contract. More research is needed pertaining to the relationship between the psychological contract and demographical information within a diverse range of organisations in South Africa. A further recommendation is that a more powerful sampling method be used. This will increase confidence in the consistency of the research findings across other similar groups.

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CHAPTER 3
ARTICLE 2

**THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LEARNER PSYCHOLOGICAL CONTRACTS,
VIOLATION OF THE PSYCHOLOGICAL CONTRACT, LEARNERS'
EXPECTATIONS, EMPLOYABILITY, WORK ENGAGEMENT, AND LIFE
SATISFACTION.**

ABSTRACT

The aim of this article is to determine the relationship between learners within the learnership, the psychological contract, state of the psychological contract, expectations and violations of the psychological contract, employability, work engagement, and life satisfaction. Furthermore, the study determines whether violation of the psychological contract, learners' expectations, and employability could predict life satisfaction of learners. A total of 237 learners completed the questionnaire. A cross-sectional survey design was used, while the Psychological Contract, Expectation, State of Psychological Contract, Violation of Psychological Contract, Employability and Life Satisfaction Scale were used as measuring instruments. A practically significant relationship with a medium effect was found between the violation of the psychological contract, state of psychological contract (negative), and employability (positive). A positive practically significant relationship was found between the state of the psychological contract and work engagement. No relationship was found between employability, life satisfaction, or work engagement. A positive practically significant relationship with a medium effect was found between life satisfaction and work engagement. Employer obligations and employability predict life satisfaction.

Introduction

The rapid transformation within the South African place of work is due to changes within value systems, international competition, new technologies, participative management, and the changing socio-economic environment. Requirements for training and retraining have turned into an extraordinarily important issue for both employers and employees as a large number of the South African population is unskilled. This could address the desire to remain in step with economic, social and technological change, and to remain competitive in the marketplace (Erasmus, Loedolff, Mda & Nel, 2010). The average percentage of payroll spent on training within South Africa is 3.13% (ASTD, 2010).

Education and training intervention are of great significance in the development of individuals (Coetzee, 2002). As stated by Van Aardt, Van Tonder and Sadie (1999) education and training are seen as two of the most essential factors that will influence economic growth in a positive way, create political stability, and encourage social success.

According to the Quarterly Labour Force Survey of November 2011 (Statistics South Africa, 2011), there were an estimated 32.4 million people aged between 15 and 64 years in South Africa, and, according to Statistics South Africa (2011), approximately 17.6 million were economically active and 4.5 million were unemployed. An employee, unemployed person, and work-seeker are each defined by The Skills Development Act 97 of 1998 as an employee. As a result of the high unemployment levels in South Africa, which is a consequence of the high population growth, low economic growth, and deteriorating production processes requiring labour, the development of the labour force is a high priority (Erasmus, Loedoff & Nel, 2010).

Learnerships are seen as the most important method of improving the quality of education and training, which increases the skills and knowledge of employees to prepare them for the world of work. The intention of learnerships is to increase learners' chances to either secure employment in a formal job or to create a basis for self-employment through acquiring the relevant skills and entrepreneurial knowledge. The question may be asked of whether learners within learnerships have the expectation to be more employable (Badroodien, 2005).

Within the chemical industry, it is important that the interests, perceptions, and expectations of learners should be taken into consideration when they are entered into a learnership programme. Learnership programmes are created for inexperienced individuals to gain practical experience and to add meaning to the knowledge they have acquired at learning institutions (Department of Labour, 2004). There are certain elements that are crucial to the psychological contract, such as training and development, which also play important roles in the make-up of the psychological contract. This is the case not only in terms of employer expectations, who considers the development of highly trained employees with certain specific skills as an important factor, but it is also essential for employees to achieve a competitive advantage in the world of work in order for them to be considered valuable assets to the organisation (Aggarwal, Datta & Bhargava, 2007).

Once a person has gained new skills and workplace experience, he or she will be more motivated and confident, which will lead to employability. Employability can be defined as achievements reached and the potential to gain good jobs. Achievements relate to acquired skills and knowledge, but importantly also includes transferable skills and personal attributes gained from studying in a field of interest (Erasmus & Van Dyk, 2000).

Today, employees or learners have high prospects concerning his or her work-life balance. As stated by Wey, Smola, and Sutton (2002), it is important to have a dissimilar psychological contract with future employers and to emphasize an improved balance between work and personal life in order to be able to reach set work and personal goals. The individual has the need to be in a milieu that will add to his or her values that he or she sees as lifelong learning contributing to his or her development. The employee feels that his or her professional and personal skills should be developed in order to adapt to changes in the ever-changing dynamic milieu, as well as his or her continuous improvement of their job performance within the organisation (Kloet, 2010). Research regarding learners' psychological contracts and the balance between work and their life satisfaction is lacking. One can ask how learners experience life satisfaction.

Foreman (2006) stated that it is part of the psychological contract to expect that employees should be enthused to extend their skills and knowledge in order to achieve the required qualifications that will make them employable. An individual's interests and attitude do not

play a very important role in finding a balance between work and personal life (Baker, 2009; Kloet, 2010).

Walmsley, Thomas and Jameson's (2006) research with graduates found that their expectations regarding the world of work were very different from what they will be expected to do within a work situation. Although very limited research was done on learnerships, this should be where learnership programmes guide new entrants and give them an overview of what the working world would be like (Anakwe & Greenhaus, 2000).

However, based on the above, a shortage of skills is clearly a serious problem in South Africa. Furthermore, there is a lack of information on learners within the learnership program that focuses on their psychological contract, skills development, employability and life satisfaction. Therefore, this study is important, since no previous study on the psychological contract and learners within learnerships in the chemical industry in South Africa could be found.

The Psychological Contract, Employee Expectations, State of the Psychological Contract, and Skills Development of Learners

The term 'psychological contract' was initially used in the early 1960s but became more accepted subsequent to the economic downturn in the early 1990s. A psychological contract was linked to the different perceptions of employees and employers within the organisation and their perceived reciprocal obligations towards each other. Rousseau (1990) stated that psychological contracts are perceived obligations, and not merely expectations of an employer or employee. It could thus be described as the expectations of an employer and employee that can occasionally exceed the expectations stipulated in the formal employment contract.

Expectations formulated by the employee during employment include compensation and benefits, skills development, and job opportunities. The kind of relationship that will exist between the employer and employee will depend on what is expected by both parties. During the psychological contract formation period, individual employees develop expectations of the employer, such as promises made by the employers' representatives, the individual

employee idiosyncratic expectations, and their perception of the organisational culture (Shore & Tetrick, 1994).

De Louw (2009) explains that employees will enter an educational programme if it is seen as important and capable of meeting the employees' expectations. Bergh and Theron (2004) mention that Vroom (1964) postulated in his expectancy theory that when an individual's expectations are met, he or she will be more motivated. Only implicit or explicit expectations should be conveyed. What employees believe they should receive is the result of their perception of what the employer promised (verbally or in writing) to deliver (Grobler, Wärmich, Carrell, Elbert & Hatfield, 2006).

According to the South African Society for Co-operative Education (SASCE) (2000), the changing expectations and new roles of learners will change the psychological contract between the organisation and learners. Previously, learners provided loyalty and commitment to the company in return for a secure job. The expectations and new roles of learners have changed to be flexible within an environment of life-long learning. Learners should also be actively involved in the organisation in order to develop their skills, to become competitive in the working world (SASCE, 2000) and to become more employable (Smith, Jennings & Solanki, 2005).

Insight into an employee's skills and career responsibilities reduces possibilities of a misunderstanding, which explains the employer and employee's role in the development of the employee's skills and career (Gerstner & Day, 1997; Kalliath, Bluedorn & Gillespie, 1999). More employee involvement in the development of skills, experience, and competence could lead to future advancement in their careers in the current organisation or future organisations, which could have been caused by clear and consistent expectations of both parties (Hsiung & Tsai, 2009). The enthusiasm to develop new skills and competencies as required within the current job, as well as a positive approach towards changes in jobs, are important factors when considering the possibility of the employee's employability (Wittekind, Raeder & Grote, 2010).

Previous research indicated that careerism did not hold high expectations in the psychological contract dimensions (employer obligations, employee obligations, state of the psychological contract, violation of the psychological contract) as it had a negative consequence, or none at

all, on the psychological contract expectations regarding work-life balance, social atmosphere, and job security (De Vos, Strydom, Fouché & Delport, 2012; Rousseau, 1990). Therefore, it is acknowledged that careerism/training and development would lead to lower psychological contract expectations associated with the social context of employment.

Based on the above discussion, the following hypothesis is formulated for this study:

Hypothesis 1: A relationship exists between a learner's psychological contract (employer obligations, employee obligations, state of the psychological contract, and violation of the psychological contract) and expectations.

It was stated by Chang (1999) that organisations that are training providers might manipulate the psychological state of employees. When the organisation is trusted by employees in doing an exceptional job in the provision of suitable training, they believe that the organisation is apprehensive in the improvement of their skills and ability; this will ensure that they become attached to the organisation. If the organisation is seen as providing the job skills that contribute to status or economic improvement within the organisation, but will not transfer to jobs within other organisations, a stronger continuation obligation will develop.

Violation of the psychological contract emerges when there is a perception by one party within the relationship that the other party does not fulfil its expectations (Robinson & Rousseau, 1994). The perception of psychological contract violation has a negative impact in the trust relationship, as well as the state of the psychological contract within the relationship between the employee and the employer (Robinson, 1996; Robinson and Rousseau, 1994).

Negative emotions can be expected if discrepancies exist between the employee and employer's perceptions and beliefs when the employee experiences violation of the psychological contract. Unfavourable feelings, emotions, and behaviour exist within the organisation when the psychological contract is violated. The employment relationship is also broken because of mistrust and anger, which is unfavourable for the organisation (Lewick & Bunker, 1996; Robinson, 1996; Robinson & Rousseau, 1994; Turnley & Feldman, 1998).

Deery, Iverson, and Walsh (2006) did research on the effect of the violation of the psychological contract on trust, as well as the potential effects on absenteeism. An indication of the research was that contract violations were associated with increased absenteeism and

decreased trust towards the organisation, the violation of the psychological contract, as well as the relationships existing between violation and workplace outcomes (Deery et al., 2006). Perceptions of mutual obligations between the employer and the employee were evaluated during the recruitment process, as well as after employment for two years. Robinson and Rousseau (1994) measured careerism, trust, satisfaction, and intention to stay, in addition to violation of the contract and fulfilment. Of specific interest was the strength of the relationship with trust. Willems, Manvier, and Henderikx (2004) stated that research indicated that violation of the psychological contract may, amongst other things, lead to reduced trust (Robinson & Rousseau, 1994), deficiency in performance (Lester, Eau & Kickul, 2001), decreased organisational commitment (Coyle-Shapiro & Kessler, 2000), and low employee satisfaction (Robinson & Rousseau, 1994). Hence, it is crucial for employers to understand and be aware of the psychological contract and its effect on employee behaviour and attitudes towards their job and the organisation (Knights & Kennedy, 2005). Contradictory to the mentioned research, a positive psychological contract leads to more satisfaction fulfilment within work, work-life balance, and life as a whole (Oyedele, 2012), more organisational obligation, less stress at work, and improved work motivation (Guest & Conway, 2002a).

Based on the discussion above, the following hypothesis is formulated for this study:

Hypothesis 2: If employees experience violation of the psychological contract they also experience mistrust (state of the psychological contract).

It is proposed through specific information that perceptions of violation may predict attitudinal and behavioural outcomes (McLean Parks & Kidder, 1994; Robinson and Rousseau, 1994). Robinson and Rousseau (1994) established that perceptions of violation are positively related to turnover and negatively associated to trust, satisfaction, and intention to stay. Realisation of the employer's obligations towards the psychological contract demonstrates behaviour that proves to be beneficial to the organisation; employees experience greater satisfaction and develop trust in the management of the organisation (Robinson, 1996; Turnley & Feldman, 2000) and have the intent to remain in employment with the organisation (Sutton & Griffin, 2004).

Employability and Skills Development of Learners

With the increasing pressure on employees to sustain their employability and marketability, training and development is the only way to improve the skills of employees that will ensure that they will keep up. Tomlinson (2002) states that the organisation will benefit by ensuring that their employees are well trained and updated with current information on the developing technology that will improve the quality of their work.

Employability refers to the organisation's capability to attain the appropriate number of employees with the correct proficiency when needed. In order to achieve flexibility in the organisation, employees need broader skills and knowledge to be applied in different roles (Sparrow, 1998). Employability is dependent on life-long learning activities through the assistance of employees to stay employable through continuous development and the organisation's enablement to keep up their productivity level (Bekker & Wilthagen, 2008).

Groot and Van Den Brink (1997) differentiated between employees' internal and external employability. External employability refers to the condition of an employee having the ability and willingness to move from one organisation to another into a similar post/position, reflecting the importance of employees' human assets in the outside labour market. Internal employability refers to the condition of an employee remaining in the same company, reflecting the employee's human assets in the internal labour market. Those employees that have received training provided by the organisation can be placed in a position that offers more independence, as they will need less supervision after formal guidance has been provided.

In a traditional employment relationship, the employer provides the employee with training and development. On the other hand, a self-employed employee is responsible for his own training and development (Postumus & Wilthagen, 2010). They suggest that the government should provide an individual budget for the training and development of self-employed employees to assist them in remaining employable. Employability is not only about developing attributes, techniques, or knowledge to make it possible for an intern to get a job or to progress within an existing career. It is related to knowledge and the focus is not as much on 'employ' as on 'ability'. Therefore, the focus is more on developing essential,

reflective abilities and visioning the empowerment, and enhancement of the learner (Viswanathan, 2007).

Employees that are highly developed and employable will expect to be compensated according to their value. The psychological contract may not always provide employees with the expected reward equal to their level of experience and qualifications. This may lead to unsatisfied employees with low satisfaction levels, which could lead to leaving the employment of the organisation (Walker & Smith, 2002). Relative employability relates to the overall positive outcomes under the situation of a commonly acceptable psychological contract, i.e. a psychological contract that includes numerous entitlements and obligations as a motion of trust and long-term commitment (Ng & Feldman, 2008).

“Jobs for life” have become history. However, much of the realism of working life was different from this imaginary psychological contract, flatter structures challenged the expectations in relation to career development being ‘onwards and upwards’, and employees started searching for more challenging opportunities and did not stay committed to one organisation to develop their skills. Organisations made employees aware that they should take responsibility for their own development in order to make their careers successful. To be employable, it is required that an employee should have highly developed skills which are in demand and which will contribute to the organisation’s profitability (Millward & Brewerton, 2000).

Employees can no longer anticipate long-term employment within an organisation, but they do anticipate career support (learnerships) to improve their employability (Sturges, Guest & Liefoghe, 2005, pp. 821.838). Due to continuous changes within the economy, employees can no longer anticipate having protected work; they should use gained skills and knowledge to make the most of their careers (Sturges, Guest & Mac Davey, 2000, pp. 351.370).

According to the statement made by Chang (1999), organisations that are also training providers may have an effect on the psychological states of employee/learners. Whilst employees trust that the employer is achieving results through the provision of appropriate training, they feel that improving their skills and ability is important to the organisation. Various expectations of the learnership system have been outlined through research of the

origin and development of the system. It has also been considered to what extent the system is able to balance the goals (Visser & Kruss, 2008).

Bartlett and Kang (2004) indicate that during the training process, an employee may become more secure in, and attached to, the organisation where the expectation of being employed will develop. This reflects the psychological contract's importance between the individual and the organisation. When a learner is not employed once the contract expires, it can cause mistrust and negativity, which is seen as a violation. Such an experience will have a constant effect on his or her life satisfaction and attitude (Erasmus & Van Dyk, 2000).

Based on the above discussion, the following hypothesis is formulated for this study:

Hypothesis 3: Violation of the psychological contract, learner's expectations and employability predict life satisfaction of a learner.

Life Satisfaction and Skills Development of Learners

Chughtai and Buckley (2008) defines life satisfaction as a sense of well-being which may be evaluated according to an individual's frame of mind, satisfaction with the association with others, goals achieved, self-concept, and self-perceived capability to deal with daily life. When an employee has the opportunity to utilise their skills and knowledge to the fullest extent by making decisions and taking responsibility, it may lead to personal growth, development, and life satisfaction. People identify themselves with what they do and the results they get, which can be seen as self-actualisation (O'Brien, 1996).

Every employee has a dissimilar life situation and has various things that happen which may be positive as well as negative. Each situation has an effect on the employee's life satisfaction for a period that may also influence their performance levels or outcome from time to time (Beutell, 2006), whilst learner reactions are not convincingly indicative of transfer, learning or even performance (Arthur, Bennet, Edens & Bell, 2003). Sahinidis and Bouris' (2007) study proved that a relationship does exist between employee-perceived training success, and employee satisfaction and commitment to the organisation.

Graves, Ohlott, and Ruderman (2007) studied the role of a possible moderator of life satisfaction in work and family balance by considering the influences of non-work. In an endeavour to explain the link between job and life satisfaction, researchers proposed three theoretical models: spill-over, compensation, and segmentation. Spill-over – fulfilment in one area of an individual's life can extend to other areas, which can be from life to job or from job to life. This model implies constructive relationships, i.e. employees experiencing job satisfaction are also assumed to be pleased in non-work-related actions. The opposite may also be true.

Previous studies supported this constructive relationship (Tait, Padgett & Baldwin, 1989). Using the spill-over model, Schmitt and Bedeian (1982) point out that the job-life satisfaction and the life-job satisfaction causal cycle cannot occur at the same time. There exists a continual debate on this relationship. Dispositional explanations, for example, recommend a spill-over (Schmitt & Mellon, 1980) of general emotional states of life satisfaction to the condition of the job (Judge, Locke, Durheim & Kluger 1998; Staw, Bell & Clausen, 1986). On the contrary, Rousseau (1978) and Chacko (1983) contend that job satisfaction has a bigger influence on life.

Researchers focused on employees' perceptions in relation to the employer's part in the psychological contract. The assumption was supported by evidence that employee benefits are perceived equally as high as obligations relating to constructive outcomes such as job and life satisfaction (De Cuyper, Rigotti, De Witte & Mohr, 2008). Guest and Conway (2002b) assessed the nature of the employment contract's impact and the state of the psychological contract on determining life satisfaction, including health.

Guest and Conway (2002a) found that a considerable alliance existed between the state of the psychological contract and life satisfaction. Longitudinal studies indicated that it is almost certain that an affiliation existed between the state of the psychological contract and life satisfaction (Ng & Feldman, 2008).

Based on the social exchange theory, Blau (1964) and Lester, Turnley, Bloodgood, and Bolino (2002) stated that employees' perception of the violation on the psychological contract can lead directly to a number of negative outcomes, such as a decrease in additional role behaviours (Robinson, 1996), negligence (Turnley & Feldman, 1999), lesser

performance, i.e. supervisor ratings (Lester et al., 2002), and more voluntary turnover, less trust, and less job satisfaction (Robinson & Rousseau, 1994). Research studies on the violation of the psychological contract have also begun to look at the role of moderating variables.

Violation and fulfilment of employer obligations are strongly related with information on general health and the similar two variables in addition to fairness which are strongly related with life satisfaction (Oyedele, 2012; Ware, 1999). Therefore, from the above, the following hypothesis is set:

Hypothesis 4: A relationship exists between psychological contract violation and life satisfaction.

Work Engagement

The focus of work engagement will be on the emotional nature of employees, the perception of themselves, and their experience with work that is theoretically characterised by vigour, devotion, and absorption. There are various definitions and measurements that exist concerning work engagement. The definition as set by Schaufeli and Bakker (2004) will be used in this study. Schaufeli and Bakker (2004, p. 295, 2006, p. 2) defined employee engagement as "a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterised by vigour, dedication, and absorption". The meaning of vigour can be explained as high energy levels, mental resilience, a willingness to put effort into your work, and perseverance. Absorption is defined as an employee's full concentration, immersion, and involvement in his or her own work.

Employee engagement differs in terms of vested concepts in organisational psychology, such as organisational commitment, job satisfaction, job engagement, and enthusiasm for the work itself, which are included in engagement (Maslach, Schaufeli & Leiter, 2001). When individuals see that they are valued and respected, they tend to reciprocate with trust and emotional engagement. As the organisation shows care and support for individuals by giving them favourable or satisfactory contracts, they expect the individual employees to react with stronger sentimental feelings towards their organisations. Furthermore, if employees perceive that organisations are hardly concerned in meeting their desires, they are likely to react with lower trust (state of the psychological contract) and contribute less to the organisation

(Molina Bortoni, 2011). The question can be asked of whether perceptions of psychological contracts will directly influence individuals'/employees' engagement.

The relationship between the manager and the employee is the most important factor in influencing employee engagement. The managers form the connection between the employee and the organisation. Violation of the psychological contract can be a direct cause of the distrust within the manager-employee relationship. When employees trust their managers, they demonstrate more pride in the organisation; this brings about the feeling that they apply their individual talents in their own achievement and development, as well as the utilisation of their workplace talents at all levels (Fegley, 2006). A relationship exists between life satisfaction and work engagement. Individuals with a higher life satisfaction also report stronger work engagement. One of three indicators of life satisfaction (positive affect and negative affect being the other two) is on the whole evaluation of feelings and attitudes about one's life at a precise moment in time, ranging from negative to positive (Beutell, 2006).

From the above, the following hypothesis is set:

Hypothesis 5: Violation of the psychological contract and employability predicts learners' engagement.

Engaged employees are motivated and willing to do more than what is expected of them. They have high energy levels and are very enthusiastic about their work. The company's interests are more important than their own and therefore they are willing to place it above their own interests (Macey & Schneider, 2008; Xanthopoulou, Bakker, Demerouti & Schaufeli, 2009).

Various researches have been conducted studies on employment engagement, but none could be found that focus on work engagement and learnerships. Work engagement is particularly important in the setting of learnerships where employees and unemployed learners obtain learnerships through SETAs and more specifically, in this study, through the Chemical Industry Education and Training Authority (CHIETA) where critical learning shortcomings exist. This study therefore includes learner engagement within the CHIETA with the primary focus on full-time employees' and unemployed learners. This study includes recommendations on future learner engagement, research and applications (CHIETA, 2011).

Researchers often debate the degree of overlap between work engagement and life satisfaction. Life satisfaction is usually regarded as a measure of how happy employees are within their work situation (Fritzsche & Parrish, 2012). Although there is a conceptual difference between the two, there is often a high degree of relationship in terms of measurement. A possible cause could be attributed to the overlap in definitions, particularly concerning both of their affective reactions towards the work situation.

McInnis (2012) explains that for work engagement, a significant main effect was found for the psychological contract of presence and work engagement. With regard to the psychological contract, it is seen as positively significant with work engagement.

From the above, the following hypotheses are set:

Hypothesis 6a: A positive relationship exists between the psychological contract and work engagement.

Hypothesis 6b: A positive relationship exists between life satisfaction and work engagement.

METHOD

Research design

This study was conducted within the quantitative paradigm. The method explains evidence for a theory through the measurement of variables that construct numeric outcomes (Fields, 2013). A cross-sectional design was used. The collection of primary data took place and was used during the research. Subsequently, the data was statistically analysed. With the information above as a background, this study should be conducted within a quantitative paradigm. This method explains evidence for a theory through the measurement of variables that construct numeric outcomes. Primary data collected from and used during research will be statistically analysed.

Participants

Learners within the chemical industries in the Vaal Triangle and KwaZulu-Natal - Karbochem, Sasol, and South African Calcium Carbide (SACC) - were identified to take part in the research. A convenient sample (n = 270) of learners in learning programmes for a time period of 12 to 18 months was selected for participation in this survey. In order to obtain permission from the site managers to do a study on the various premises, as well as to enter the premises, a letter was drafted including the final research proposal to explain the study's purpose. Thereafter, the letters were distributed to the training assessors to inform them of the study and to get their buy-in. The sourcing of permission from different companies with learners was done in the Vaal Triangle and KwaZulu-Natal. Upon this permission being granted, assessors of the learners were requested to give permission for these learners to partake in the study. A sample of 270 learners was used to complete the questionnaire. After completion, analysis of the data took place, and results were posted in the form of two research articles.

Table 1

Compilation of Study Population (N=237)

Item	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Learnership	Full-time employee within learnership (1)	20	8.4
	Unemployed learner within learnership (2)	122	51.5
	Missing response	95	40.1
	Total	237	100.0
Gender	Female (1)	36	15.2
	Male (2)	200	84.4
	Missing responses	1	0.4
	Total	237	100.0
Race	African	178	75.1
	Coloured	1	0.4
	Indian	5	2.1
	White	48	20.3
	Missing responses	5	2.1
	Total	237	100.0
Age	18 to 20 years	34	14.3
	21 to 25 years	97	40.9
	26 to 30 years	62	26.2
	31 to 35 years	19	8.0
	36 to 40 years	9	3.8
	41 to 60 years	7	3.0
	Missing responses	9	3.8
	Total	237	100.0

Learnership	enrolment	2005	2	0.8
duration-Commence years		2008	2	0.8
		2009	27	11.4
		2010	29	12.2
		2011	150	63.3
		Missing responses	27	11.4
		Total	237	100.0
Learnership	enrolment	2007	1	0.4
duration-Completion years		2008	1	0.4
		2009	2	0.8
		2010	3	0.13
		2011	47	19.8
Those who expected to		2012	59	24.9
complete in the future		2013	21	8.9
		2014	43	18.1
		Missing responses	60	25.3
		Total	237	100.0

Measuring Instruments

Biographical questionnaire: This questionnaire was utilised to gain information concerning individual variables (gender, age, race, and type of learnership).

The **Expectations Questionnaire**, as developed by Isaksson, (2004), was used to measure learners' expectations. The questionnaire consists of 4 items. Questions range from "I expect that I will have to leave here once my present employment contract with this organisation has run out" to "I have been promised a permanent contract with this organisation when my present learnership expires" (Isaksson et al., 2003). The questions ranged along a 5-point scale varying from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). In previous studies, Cronbach's Alpha coefficients in Europe ranged from 0.74 to 0.91 (Isaksson et al., 2003).

The **Employability Questionnaire** of De Witte (2000) was used to measure employability. The questionnaire consists of a 4-item scale measuring the variable of employability. Questions include: "I am optimistic that I would find a job, if I looked for one" and "I could easily switch to another employer, if I wanted to?" (Isaksson et al., 2003). The questionnaire also appears to have adequate and consistent psychometric properties across the datasets in

Europe where Cronbach's Alpha coefficients were obtained between 0.84 and 0.90 (Isaksson et al., 2003).

Psychological contract obligations of the employer and employee, state of the psychological contract, and violations of the psychological contract was measured by means of the measurement instrument developed by members of the research team of the Psychological Contract Across Nations (PSYCONES). The **Employer Obligations Questionnaire** focuses on the promises and commitments employers occasionally make to their employees. The questionnaire contains 15 items. Questions on this questionnaire range from "Has your organisation promised or committed itself to provide you with interesting work?" to "Has your organisation promised or committed itself to help you deal with problems you encounter outside work?" (Isaksson et al., 2003). The questions ranged along a 5-point scale varying from 0 (No) and to 5 (Yes, and promise fully kept). In studies conducted in South Africa, the following Cronbach's Alpha coefficients were obtained: 0.93 (Keyser, 2010) and 0,95 (De Beer, 2011). These coefficients indicate the internal consistency of this questionnaire.

The **Employee Obligations Questionnaire** focuses on promises and commitments employees occasionally make to their employer. The questionnaire consists of 16 items. Examples of questions in this questionnaire vary from "Have you promised or committed yourself to go to work even if you don't feel particularly well?" to "Have you promised or committed yourself to work enthusiastically on jobs you would prefer not to be doing?" The questions range along a 5-point frequency-rating scale varying from 0 (No) to 5 (Yes, fully kept promise). In a study conducted by De Beer (2011), a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.94 was found.

The **State of the Psychological Contract** consists of 7 items. Answers were given on a 5-point Likert-scale ranging from 1 (not at all) to 5 (totally). It includes questions such as "Do you feel you are rewarded fairly for the amount of work you put into your job?" and "Do you feel you are fairly paid for the work you do?" South African studies obtained Cronbach's Alpha coefficients of 0.86 (Yazbek, 2009) and 0.85 (De Beer, 2011).

Violations of obligations were measured by means of the **Psychological Contract Questionnaire**, as developed by Isaksson et al. (2003). The questions focus on six feelings of employees (happy, angry, pleased, violated, disappointed, and grateful). The questionnaire

consists of 6 items as rated on a 5-point scale, ranging from 1 (strongly agree) to 5 (strongly disagree).

The **Life Satisfaction Scale** by Guest and Conway (1998) was used to measure employee life satisfaction. The life satisfaction scale makes use of a 7-point frequency scale ranging from 1 (Very dissatisfied) to 7 (Very satisfied). The questions range from “How satisfied do you currently feel about your life in general?” to “How satisfied do you currently feel about the financial situation of your household?” (Guest & Conway, 1998). Cronbach’s Alpha coefficients obtained in Europe ranged from 0.80 to 0.86.

The **Utrecht Engagement Scale** (UWES) (Schaufeli, Salanova, Gonzalez-Roma & Bakker, 2002) was used to measure employee engagement. The UWES has three scales, namely vigour (six items) and dedication (five items), and absorption samples of items relating to the three dimensions are the following: “I am bursting with energy in my job” (vigour); “I find my work full of meaning and purpose” (dedication); and “When I am working, I forget everything around me” (absorption). According to Schaufeli et al. (2002) and Storm (2002), Cronbach’s Alpha coefficients have been determined to be between 0.68 and 0.91. The UWES makes use of a six-point frequency scale ranging from 0 (never) to 6 (always).

Statistical Analysis

The SPSS 21 programme (IBM Corporation, 2013) was used to conduct statistical analysis, including descriptive statistics, for example means, standard deviations, skewness, and kurtosis. Not only should statistics for significant testing be used, but also those affected elements recognized to test the relationship of the statistical significance. The Cronbach’s Alpha coefficient and inter-item correlations coefficients are the methods used to determine validity and reliability of the measuring instruments (Clark & Watson, 1995).

The Pearson’s *product moment correlation* coefficient was used to indicate the affiliation between variables (levels of statistical significance = $p < 0.05$; a cut-off point of 0,30 represents a medium effect and a cut-off of 0.50 represents a large effect) (Cohen, Cohen, West & Aiken, 2002). The use of statistical significance testing is criticised by Steyn (2009). He recommended that effect sizes be established to verify the impact of a statistically important relationship.

Standard multiple regression analysis will be carried out. A regression analysis is utilised to determine the percentage variance in the dependent variable that is predicted by the independent variables. Tabachnick and Fidell (2001) stated that the link between an independent and dependent variable reveal variance shared with the dependent variable. Numerous variances may be expected from other independent variables (Cohen, 1988).

RESULTS

Descriptive Statistics and Correlations

The descriptive statistics, Cronbach's Alpha coefficients, and Pearson correlations are reported in Table 2. The Cronbach's Alpha coefficients of the scales were acceptable with the cut-off point of 0.70 (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994) except for expectations of learners ($\alpha = 0.67$), which was lower than 0.70.

Table 2

The descriptive statistics, alpha coefficients and Pearson correlations

Variable	A	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Learners Expectations	0.67	12.12	2.87	1						
2. Employer obligations	0.91	62.05	8.89	0.12	1					
3. Employee obligations	0.86	72.56	6.50	0.11	0.49**	1				
4. Violation of PC	0.81	11.63	4.86	-0.35**	-0.33**	-0.27**	1			
5. State of PC	0.90	26.35	6.52	0.15	0.49**	0.44**	-0.48**	1		
6. Employability	0.83	12.46	4.51	-0.37**	-0.01*	-0.00	0.41**	-0.14*	1	
7. Life satisfaction	0.81	32.83	6.37	0.15*	0.28**	0.37**	-0.21**	0.24**	0.09	1
8. Work Engagement	0.92	86.85	12.15	0.01	0.39**	0.37**	-0.19**	0.36**	0.06	0.32**

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

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

Table 2 shows a negative practical significant relationship with a medium effect between learners' expectations, violation of psychological contract, and employability of learners.

Statistically significant relationships exist between learners' expectations and life satisfaction. There was a positive practically significant relationship found between employers' obligations, employee obligations, state of the psychological contract, and work engagement, and a negative relationship with violation of the psychological contract. A statistically significant relationship was found between employer obligations, employability (negative), and life satisfaction (positive). A negative statistically significant relationship was found between employee obligations and violation of the psychological contract, but a practically significant relationship with a medium effect was found between employee obligations, state of the psychological contract, life satisfaction, and work engagement.

A practically significant relationship with a medium effect was found between the violation of the psychological contract, the state of psychological contract (negative), and employability (positive). A statistically significant negative relationship was found between the violation of the psychological contract, life satisfaction, and work engagement. A statistically significant relationship was found between the state of the psychological contract, employability (negative), and life satisfaction (positive). A positive practically significant relationship exists between the state of the psychological contract and work engagement. No relationship was found between employability, life satisfaction, or work engagement. A positive practically significant relationship with a medium effect was found between life satisfaction and work engagement.

Regression Analysis

A series of multiple regressions was carried out. Baron and Kenny (1986) explain that the beta coefficients of different regression equations need to be compared. The mediator should be predicted by the independent variable, while the mediator and the independent variable should predict the dependent variable. The dependent variable should be regressed on the independent variable. If all the steps prove significant, perfect mediation is held when controlling for the mediator. This means that the independent variable does not predict the dependent variable.

Table 3 shows the results of the multiple regression analysis, with learners' life satisfaction as a dependent variable and employer obligations, employee obligations, state of psychological

contract, violations of psychological contract, learners' expectations, employability, life satisfaction, and engagement as independent variables.

Table 3

Multiple Regression Analyses with learners life satisfaction as a dependent variable and employer obligations, employee obligations, state of psychological contract, violations of psychological contract, expectations, employability and work engagement as independent variables

Model		Standardized Coefficients	T	P	F	R	R ²	ΔR ²
Beta								
1	(Constant)		1.41	0.16	10.77	0.44	0.20	0.18
	Employer obligations	0.10	1.14	0.26				
	Employee obligations	0.29	3.53	0.00*				
	Violation of the psychological contract	-0.07	-0.94	0.35				
	State of the psychological contract	0.10	1.08	0.28				
2	(Constant)		1.13	0.26	0.51	0.45	0.20	0.18
	Employer obligations	0.10	1.13	0.26				
	Employee obligations	0.29	3.47	0.00*				
	Violation of the psychological contract	-0.05	-0.67	0.51				
	State of the psychological contract	0.10	1.12	0.27				
	Expectations	0.05	0.71	0.48				
3	(Constant)		0.95	0.35	4.05	0.47	0.22	0.19
	Employer obligations	0.10	1.13	0.26				
	Employee obligations	0.26	3.19	0.00*				
	Violation of the psychological contract	-0.12	-1.42	0.16				
	State of the psychological contract	0.10	1.14	0.26				
	Expectations	0.10	1.29	0.20				
	Employability	0.16	2.01	0.05*				
4	(Constant)		0.49	0.63	2.34	0.48	0.23	0.20
	Employer obligations	0.09	1.05	0.30				
	Employee obligations	0.24	2.90	0.00				
	Violation of the psychological contract	-0.12	-1.43	0.16				
	State of the psychological contract	0.06	0.61	0.54				
	Expectations	0.10	1.36	0.18				
	Employability	0.16	2.00	0.05*				
	Engagement	0.12	1.53	0.13				

*Statistically significant at $p < 0.05$

The results in Table 3 indicate that no significant model could be found. Models 1 and 2 indicate that employee obligations predict life satisfaction. Model 1 accounts for 18% of the total variance. The first step of the regression analysis produced no significant fit model $F_{(4,176)}=10.77$; $p < 0.16$. In model 2, expectations were added to the dimensions of the psychological contract and it showed no significant fit model $F_{(1,175)}=0.51$ $p < 0.26$. In model

3, employer obligations and employability predict life satisfaction. 0.51% of the total variance in life satisfaction could be accounted for. No significant fit of the data was found $F_{(1,174)}=4.05$, $p < 0.63$. Model 4 accounts for only 0.20% of the total variance. Only employability predicts life satisfaction when adding engagement. No significant fit was found $F_{(1,173)}=2.34$, $p<0.63$.

The results in Table 4, Model 1 show that two dimensions of the psychological contract (employee obligations and state of the psychological contract).

Table 4

Multiple Regression Analyses with learners' engagement as a dependent variable and employer obligations, employee obligations, state of psychological contract, violations of psychological contract, expectations, employability and life satisfaction as independent variables

Model		Standardized Coefficients	T	P	F	R	R ²	ΔR ²
		Beta						
1	(Constant)		3.72	0.00*	12.81	0.44	0.20	0.18
	Employer obligations	0.13	1.75	0.08				
	Employee obligations	0.21	2.80	0.01*				
	Violation of the psychological contract	0.01	0.19	0.85				
	State of the psychological contract	0.21	2.69	0.01*				
2	(Constant)		3.67	0.00	0.11	0.44	0.20	0.18
	Employer obligations	0.13	1.75	0.08				
	Employee obligations	0.21	2.80	0.01*				
	Violation of the psychological contract	0.01	0.16	0.87				
	State of the psychological contract	0.22	2.70	0.01*				
3	Expectations	-0.02	-0.33	0.74				
	(Constant)		3.64	0.00	3.15	0.46	0.21	0.19
	Employer obligations	0.13	1.74	0.08				
	Employee obligations	0.19	2.61	0.01*				
	Violation of the psychological contract	-0.04	-0.54	0.59				
4	State of the psychological contract	0.22	2.72	0.01*				
	Expectations	-0.02	-0.31	0.76				
	Employability	0.12	1.78	0.08				
	(Constant)		3.42	0.00	7.81	0.49	0.24	0.21
	Employer obligations	0.11	1.47	0.15				
	Employee obligations	0.14	1.86	0.07				
	Violation of the psychological contract	-0.02	-0.19	0.85				

State of the psychological contract	0.21	2.73	0.01*
Expectations	-0.03	-0.49	0.62
Employability	0.09	1.35	0.18
Life satisfaction	0.19	2.80	0.01*

*Statistically significant at $p < 0.05$

The results in Table 4, Model 1 show that two dimensions of the psychological contract (employee obligations and state of the psychological contract) predict engagement of learners. In model 2, by adding expectation of learners, and in model 3, by adding employability, they also show that only two dimensions of the psychological contract (employee obligations and state of the psychological contract) predict learner engagement. In model 3, by adding life satisfaction, it shows that only the state of the psychological contract (trust) and life satisfaction predicts learner engagement.

In Table 5 the results of the hypothesis of this article are given.

Table 5

Results of the hypothesis

Hypothesis	Findings
Hypothesis 1: A relationship exists between a learner's psychological contract (employer obligations, employee obligations, state of the psychological contract, and violation of the psychological contract) and expectations.	In this research it was found that no relationship exists between the dimensions of the psychological contract (employer obligations, employee obligations and state of the psychological contract) but a practically negative relationship exists between learners' expectations and violation of the psychological contract. Therefore, hypothesis 1: a relationship exists between a learners psychological contract, is partially accepted. This is confirmed by the study of Robinson and Rousseau (1994) and Robinson (1996) that a negative relationship exists between the learners' expectations and violation of the psychological contract. This means that learners within learnerships experience it the same as employees that if their expectations are not met, the psychological contract is violated.
Hypothesis 2: If employees experience violation of the psychological contract, they also experience mistrust (state of the psychological contract)	This hypothesis is accepted also for learners within learnerships. In studies done by different authors and researchers, it was found that if employees experience violation

	of the psychological contract, they also experience mistrust (state of the psychological contract). Therefore, negative practical significant relationships exist between state of the psychological contract (trust) and violation of the psychological contract of learners within learnerships.
Hypothesis 3: Violation of the psychological contract, learnership employability predicts learners' life satisfaction.	Hypothesis 3 is partially accepted. As seen in Table 4 in model 3, employer obligations and employability predict life satisfaction. 0.51% of the total variance in life satisfaction could be accounted for. No significant fit of the data was found $F_{(1,174)}=4.05, p < 0.63$. Model 4 accounts for only 0.20% of the total variance. Only employability predicts life satisfaction when adding engagement. Therefore, violation of the psychological contract did not predict learners' life satisfaction.
Hypothesis 4: A relationship exists between psychological contract violation and life satisfaction.	Hypothesis 4 is accepted. A negative statistically significant relationship was found between violation of the psychological contract and life satisfaction of learners within learnerships.
Hypothesis 5: Violation of the psychological contract and employability of learners predict learners' engagement.	Hypothesis 5 is partially accepted, since the results in Table 5 Model 1 show that two dimensions of the psychological contract (employee obligations and state of the psychological contract) predict engagement of learners. Model 2, by adding expectation of learners and model 3 by adding employability, also show that only two dimensions of the psychological contract (employee obligations and state of the psychological contract) predict engagement of the learners. Model 3, by adding life satisfaction, shows that only the state of the psychological contract (trust) and life satisfaction predict engagement of learners.
Hypothesis 6a: A positive relationship exists between psychological contract and engagement.	A positive practical significant relationship was found between employers' obligations, employee obligations, state of the psychological contract, work engagement and a negative relationship with the violation of the psychological contract.
Hypothesis 6b: A positive relationship exists between life satisfaction and engagement.	A positive practically significant relationship was found between life satisfaction and engagement of learners within learnerships.

CONCLUSION, RECOMMENDATIONS AND LIMITATIONS

The aim of this study focused on the relationship between learners within learnerships, the psychological contract, the state of the psychological contract, expectations, violations of the psychological contract, employability, work engagement, and life satisfaction. Furthermore, the study attempted to determine whether violation of the psychological contract, learners' expectations, and employability predicted learners' life satisfaction.

The results of the Pearson correlations showed that a negative practically significant relationship with a medium effect existed between learners' expectations, violation of the psychological contract, and employability of learners. Positive practically significant relationships between employers' obligations, employee obligations, state of the psychological contract and work engagement, and a negative relationship with violation of the psychological contract, were found. This means that if learners experience that employers' obligations, employee obligations and state of the psychological contract are met, they are also more engaged, but if not met, they experience violation of the psychological contract. A practically significant relationship with a medium effect was found between employee obligations, state of the psychological contract, life satisfaction, and work engagement. If learners experienced positive employee obligations and trusted the employer, they also experienced more life satisfaction and work engagement.

A practically significant relationship with a medium effect exist between the violation of the psychological contract, state of the psychological contract (negative), and employability (positive). A positive practically significant relationship exists between the state of the psychological contract and work engagement. No relationship was found between employability, life satisfaction, and work engagement, but a positive practically significant relationship with a medium effect exists between life satisfaction and work engagement.

Kloet (2010) points out that research is lacking regarding learners' psychological contract and the balance between work and their personal lives. Therefore, the findings above are important for future research on the topic. The results indicated, that, with learners' life satisfaction as a dependent variable and employee obligations, employer obligations, state of the psychological contract, violations of the psychological contract, expectations, employability and engagement as independent variables, that no significant model exists. Employers' obligations and employability predict life satisfaction. Only employability predicts life satisfaction when adding engagement. No significant fit was found ($F_{(1,173)}=2.34$, $p<0.63$).

Learners' engagement as a dependent variable and employer obligations, employee obligations, state of the psychological contract, violations of psychological contract, expectations, employability and life satisfaction as independent variables, shows that two dimensions of the psychological contract (employee obligations and state of the psychological contract) predict engagement of learners. In model 2, by adding expectation of learners, and model 3, by adding employability, it also shows that only two dimensions of the psychological contract (employee obligations and state of the psychological contract) predict learner engagement. In model 3, by adding life satisfaction, shows that only the state of the psychological contract (trust) and life satisfaction predict engagement of learners.

The findings of this study indicated that more research is needed regarding the psychological contract of learners, their expectations, employability, and their life satisfaction. Limited research on this entire construct exists regarding learners in learnerships. Future research should include larger samples within different industries and must also be more representative of the South African population in total.

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CHAPTER 4

CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In this chapter the conclusions and limitations regarding the literature and empirical study are discussed. Recommendations are also made for the organisation and for future research.

4.1 CONCLUSIONS

Chapter 1 examined the problem statement and the research objectives, which included the general objective and specific objectives. The general objective of this study was to investigate how life satisfaction and work engagement are influenced by learners' expectations, employability, as well as violation of the psychological contract, and what the roles of the psychological contract, the state of the psychological contract, and the work engagement of learners were.

Chapter 2: Article 1 The main aim of this article was to determine the differences in the levels of the psychological contracts, violation of the psychological contract, learners' expectations, employability, life satisfaction, and work engagement between individual variables (type of learnership contracts, gender, race, age, date of commencement of learnership, date of completion of learnership). A cross-sectional survey design was used. The following scales were administered: psychological contract scale, violation of the psychological contract scale, learners' expectations scale, employability scale, life satisfaction scale, engagement scale, and biographical scale. The outcome of this measurement indicated a statistically significant difference was obtained for age, date of commencement of learnership, and date of completion of learnership, but no relationships with type of learnership contract, gender, or race were found.

In this study, the MANOVA was used for determining particular differences whenever statistical differences were found. The MANOVA analysis results indicated a considerable statistical difference for age, date of commencement of learnership, and date of completion of learnership, but no relationship was found with the specific type of learnership contract, gender, and race. The result hereof was that no differences were experienced by both employed and unemployed learners within a learnership. In a study in the chemical industry

by Keyser (2010) it was also found that there were no existing differences concerning psychological contract levels between groups with regard to the nature of the contract (permanent and temporary employees).

A statistically significant difference was found regarding employer obligation where learners, between ages 18 and 20 years and 41 and 60 years, experienced employee obligations to a higher degree. The state of the psychological contract was experienced higher by those between ages 18 and 20 than by those between 36 and 40 years of age. Older learners experienced more violation of the psychological contract than the younger learners. Younger learners felt less employable than older learners. Life satisfaction was experienced to a higher degree by learners between ages 18 and 20 years than by those between ages 36 and 40 years.

A statistically significant relationship was found between date of commencement of learnership, state of the psychological contract, violation of the psychological contract, and employability. Learners, who commenced learnerships in 2009 experienced less state of psychological contract than those who commenced theirs in 2011. Less violation of the psychological contract by the employer was felt by learners who commenced learnerships in 2008 than those who commenced their learnerships in 2005. Learners commencing learnerships in 2005 and 2008 felt less employable than those who commenced their learnerships in 2009 up to 2011. Learners completing their learnership in 2010 experienced less state of the psychological contract than those who completed their learnerships in 2008 and they also experienced less violation of their psychological contract than those who completed theirs in 2011.

Chapter 3: Article 2 The main aim of this article focused on the relationship between learners within learnerships' the psychological contract, the state of the psychological contract, expectations, violations of the psychological contract, employability, and life satisfaction. Moreover, the research aimed to verify whether violation of the psychological contract, learner's expectations, and employability predicted life satisfaction of learners. A cross-sectional survey design was used, while the Psychological Contract, Expectation, State of Psychological Contract, Violation of Psychological Contract, Employability and Life Satisfaction Scale were used as measuring instruments.

The results of the Pearson correlations showed the existence of a negative practically significant relationship with a medium effect between learners' expectations, violation of psychological contract, and employability of learners. However, a positive practically significant relationship was found between employers' obligations, employee obligations, state of the psychological contract, and work engagement, and a negative relationship with violation of the psychological contract. This means that if learners experience that employers' obligations, employee obligations, state of the psychological contract are met, they are also more engaged, but if these expectations are not met, they experience violation of the psychological contract. A practically significant relationship with a medium effect was found between employee obligations, state of the psychological contract, life satisfaction, and work engagement. If learners experienced positive employee obligations and trusted the employer they also experienced more life satisfaction and work engagement.

A practically significant relationship with a medium effect was found between violation of the psychological contract, state of the psychological contract (negative), and employability (positive). A positive practically significant relationship was found between the state of the psychological contract and work engagement. No relationship was found between employability, life satisfaction, or work engagement, but a positive practically significant relationship with a medium effect was found between life satisfaction and work engagement.

Learners' work engagement as a dependent variable and employer obligations, employee obligations, state of the psychological contract, violations of the psychological contract, expectations, employability, and life satisfaction as independent variables showed that two dimensions of the psychological contract (employee obligations and state of the psychological contract) predicted engagement of learners. Model 2, by adding expectation of learners, and model 3, by adding employability, also showed that only two dimensions of the psychological contract (employee obligations and state of the psychological contract) envisaged engagement of the learners. Model 3, by adding life satisfaction, showed that only state of the psychological contract (trust) and life satisfaction predicted engagement of learners.

4.2 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

To generalise the finding, further research with a larger sample of learners needs to be done. It is recommended that a larger population group, representing the South African population on a national level, should be used to improve generalisability. Different industries need to be used in more studies in order to determine inconsistencies among various industries and to generalise findings.

Follow-up research should focus on demographic information and the psychological contract, and demographic information and violation of the psychological contract. Further research is needed on the relationship between the psychological contract and demographic information. This should be done in a varied range of South African organisations.

It was indicated by this study that further research is essential on the subject of the psychological contract of learners, their expectations, employability, and their life satisfaction. Inadequate research on this entire construct regarding learners in learnerships exists. Future research should include larger samples within different industries and must also be more representative of the diverse South African population in total.

4.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations regarding experiences of the psychological contract, work engagement, and life satisfaction of learners within the chemical industry, as well as recommendations for more research will be discussed in this section.

4.3.1 Recommendations for organisations.

Further research on a larger sample of learners needs to be done to generalise the finding. It is recommended that a larger population group be used, representing the South African population on a national level, which will improve generalisability. More research needs to be done within different industries to establish inconsistencies amongst diverse industries and to generalise results.

Follow-up research should focus on demographic information and the psychological contract and demographic information and violation of the psychological contract. Additional research

is needed on the relationship between the psychological contract and demographic information within a diverse range of South African organisations.

The results of this research established the importance for research to focus on demographic characteristics and thus the diversity of the employees within the workplace. The on-going research interest in the phenomenon is driven by the importance of fulfilment of reciprocal obligations and violation of the psychological contract. It is recommended that a larger and more powerful sampling method be used. This could lead to the enhancement of confidence in the consistency of the research findings across other similar groups.

4.3.2 Recommendations for future research.

To acknowledge interdependencies amongst observations in organisation studies, equivocal research levels took a contextual, top-down approach (Kozlowski & Klein, 2000). No explicit research on the possible consequences of these dependencies amongst departments, groups, supervisors, occupational therapy groups, and dissimilar jobs could be found. It is recommended that the measurement of the bilateral (employers) perspective in South Africa be considered.

Kloet (2010) stated that more research needed to be done with regard to learners' psychological contract and the balance between work and their personal life. Therefore it is found to be important to do future research on the topic.

The conclusion of this study indicated that more research is needed regarding the psychological contract of learners, their expectations, employability, and their life satisfaction. Limited research exists on this entire construct with regard to learners in learnerships. Upcoming research should include larger samples within different industries and must represent the South African population in its entirety.

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