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LETÍCIA GOMES MAIA

Organizational commitment, psychological contract and job performance:
a longitudinal study with newcomers

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Organizational commitment, psychological contract and job performance:
a longitudinal study with newcomers

Tese apresentada ao Núcleo de Pós-Graduação
em Administração da Escola de
Administração, da Universidade Federal da
Bahia, como requisito parcial para a conclusão
do Doutorado em Administração.

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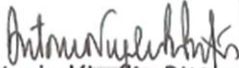
ATA DA DEFESA PÚBLICA DA TESE DE LETÍCIA GOMES MAIA
ALUNA DO CURSO DE DOUTORADO DO PROGRAMA DE PÓS-GRADUAÇÃO EM ADMINISTRAÇÃO DA UNIVERSIDADE FEDERAL DA BAHIA.

Aos catorze dias do mês de abril do ano dois mil e catorze, às catorze horas, na sala 20, da Escola de Administração da Universidade Federal da Bahia, a comissão julgadora eleita pelo Colegiado deste Núcleo de Pós-Graduação, composta pelos Professores Dr. Antonio Virgílio Bittencourt Bastos – orientador (PSI/UFBA - NPGA), Dr. Carlos Alberto Freire Medeiros (UFRN), Dr. Jairo Eduardo Borges-Andrade (UnB), Dra. Sônia Maria Rodrigues Calado Dias (Faculdade dos Guararapes - PE) e Dra. Sônia Maria Guedes Gondim (PSI/UFBA), se reuniu em sessão pública deste Colegiado para julgar o trabalho de tese, intitulada: ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT, PSYCHOLOGICAL CONTRACT AND JOB PERFORMANCE: A LONGITUDINAL STUDY WITH NENCIEMER

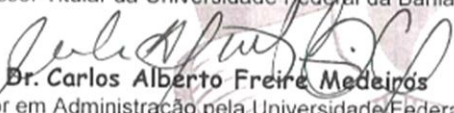
de autoria de LETÍCIA GOMES MAIA. Realizada a defesa pública da tese, a aluna foi submetida à arguição pela comissão julgadora e ao debate. Em seguida, a comissão julgadora, após analisar a defesa da tese feita pela aluna, concluiu que esta merece ser APROVADA

Nada mais havendo a ser tratado, esta comissão julgadora encerrou os trabalhos do qual lavrei a presente ata que, após lida e aprovada, vai assinada por mim, Antonio Virgílio Bittencourt Bastos, orientador, pelos demais membros da banca, pelo coordenador deste Núcleo de Pós-Graduação, e pela aluna.


Salvador, 14 de abril de 2014.


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It is said that before a river falls into the ocean, it trembles with fear. It looks back at the whole journey, the peaks of the mountains, the long winding path through the forests, through the people, and it sees in front of it such a vast ocean that entering into it is nothing but disappearing forever.

But there is no other way. The river cannot go back. Neither can you go back. Going back is impossible in existence; you can only go forward. The river has to take the risk and go into the ocean. And only when it enters the ocean will the fear disappear because only then will the river know that it is not disappearing into the ocean; rather, it is becoming the ocean.

Dizem que antes de um rio entrar no mar, ele treme de medo. Olha para trás, para toda a jornada que percorreu, para os cumes, as montanhas, para o longo caminho sinuoso que trilhou através de florestas e povoados, e vê à sua frente um oceano tão vasto, que entrar nele nada mais é do que desaparecer para sempre. Mas não há outra maneira. O rio não pode voltar. Ninguém pode voltar. Voltar é impossível na existência. O rio precisa se arriscar e entrar no oceano. E somente quando ele entra no oceano é que o medo desaparece, porque apenas então o rio saberá que não se trata de desaparecer no oceano, mas de tornar-se oceano.

Osho – Beyond Enlightenment

Maia, L. G. (2014). *Organizational commitment, psychological contract and job performance: a longitudinal study with newcomers*. Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, Federal University of Bahia, Salvador, BA.

Abstract

Organizational commitment, psychological contract and job performance are constructs that fall within the field of the discipline of Organizational Behavior, a field that has great high potential to contribute to the improvement of management processes, both in policy formulation and in development of practices. The objectives of this thesis are to analyze quantitative and qualitatively the development of the employees' psychological contract and organizational commitment as dynamic constructs, and to test an explanatory model of the relations between these two constructs and job performance. The scarcity of studies into the development of both the psychological contract, as the organizational commitment over time points to a significant gap in research in these concepts and is an indicator of the potential contribution of this thesis has. The research was conducted with newcomers to Brazilian public agency from the time of entry over period of three years. The investigation of the procedural nature of these constructs aimed to understand the changes that happened over time and the possible reasons for this. We used structural equation modelling, latent growth curve modelling, and hierarchical multiple regression to analyse the hypotheses. The results are presented in four studies. In summary, the first and second studies focus on the development of the psychological contract and organizational commitment, respectively. We found that especially when there is low fulfilment of the obligations in psychological contract by both parties, employer and employee, change in psychological contract is most likely to occur. About affective organizational commitment, we found that changes tend to be more associated with work experiences than with individual characteristics. Moreover, perceived employer and employee obligations in the psychological contract and affective organizational commitment decreased over time. The third and fourth studies investigate the relationship between these two constructs and job performance. We assessed job performance by supervisor ratings in performance appraisals undertaken by the organization. Specifically, the third study makes a detailed analysis of the quantitative results and the fourth adds qualitative data to the analysis, from interviews with the same individuals over the first three years of work in the organization. Our results show that fulfilment of the psychological contract explained about 40% of affective organizational commitment's variance and about 5% of job performance's. Together in a mediation model, the variables of psychological contract fulfilment and affective organizational commitment explained about 7% of the variance in job performance. In a longitudinal mediation model, affective organizational commitment had 86.3% of the variance explained, while job performance had 12.3%. This thesis advances prior research by showing that job performance can be predicted by a combination of variables, such as psychological contract fulfilment and affective organizational commitment.

Keywords: organizational commitment; psychological contract; fulfilment of psychological contract; job performance.

Maia, L. G. (2014). *Comprometimento organizacional, contrato psicológico e desempenho no trabalho: um estudo longitudinal com ingressantes*. Tese de doutorado, Universidade Federal da Bahia, Salvador, BA.

Resumo

Comprometimento organizacional, contrato psicológico e desempenho no trabalho são construtos que se inserem no campo da disciplina de Comportamento Organizacional, um campo que possui um elevado potencial de contribuição para a melhoria dos processos de gestão, tanto na formulação de políticas quanto no desenvolvimento de práticas. Os objetivos desta tese são analisar quantitativa e qualitativamente o desenvolvimento do contrato psicológico e do comprometimento organizacional de ingressantes a uma organização pública ao longo do tempo e testar um modelo explicativo das relações entre esses dois construtos e o desempenho no trabalho. A escassez de estudos que colaborem para a compreensão do desenvolvimento tanto do contrato psicológico, quanto do comprometimento organizacional ao longo do tempo apontam para uma importante lacuna na pesquisa desses conceitos e constitui um indicador do potencial de contribuição que essa tese possui. A pesquisa foi realizada com funcionários recém-admitidos por meio de concurso a um órgão público brasileiro, ao longo de um período de três anos. A investigação da natureza processual desses construtos objetivou compreender as mudanças ocorridas ao longo do tempo e as possíveis razões para essas mudanças. Modelagem de equações estruturais, modelagem de crescimento latente e análise de regressão hierárquica múltipla foram algumas das técnicas estatísticas utilizadas para analisar as hipóteses. Os resultados obtidos foram apresentados por meio de quatro estudos. Os dois primeiros estudos concentram-se no desenvolvimento do contrato psicológico e comprometimento organizacional. Os resultados mostram que, especialmente quando há baixo cumprimento das obrigações previstas no contrato psicológico por ambas as partes, empregador e empregado, a mudança no contrato psicológico é mais provável de ocorrer. Sobre o comprometimento organizacional afetivo, os resultados sugerem que as mudanças tendem a ser mais associadas com experiências de trabalho do que com características individuais. Além disso, as obrigações de empregador e empregado percebidas no contrato psicológico e o comprometimento organizacional afetivo apresentaram uma tendência de diminuição ao longo do tempo. O terceiro e quarto estudos investigam a relação entre esses dois construtos e o desempenho no trabalho, avaliado pelo supervisor dentro do contexto do processo de avaliação da organização participante. Especificamente, o terceiro estudo faz uma análise aprofundada dos resultados quantitativos e o quarto acrescenta dados qualitativos à análise, a partir de entrevistas com os mesmos indivíduos ao longo dos três primeiros anos de trabalho na organização. O cumprimento do contrato psicológico explicou cerca de 40% da variância no comprometimento organizacional afetivo e cerca de 5% da variância do desempenho no trabalho. Juntas em um modelo de mediação, as variáveis de cumprimento do contrato psicológico e comprometimento organizacional afetivo explicaram cerca de 7% da variância do desempenho no trabalho. Em um modelo de mediação longitudinal, o comprometimento organizacional afetivo teve 86,3% da variância explicada e o desempenho no trabalho teve 12,3%. Os resultados desta tese fornecem percepções que podem contribuir para a compreensão da relação entre comprometimento organizacional e desempenho no trabalho, mostrando que o desempenho no trabalho pode ser predito por uma combinação de variáveis, tais como o cumprimento do contrato psicológico e o comprometimento organizacional.

Palavras-chave: comprometimento organizacional; contrato psicológico; cumprimento do contrato psicológico; desempenho no trabalho.

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Chapter 1: A Prelude to Organizational Commitment, Psychological Contract and Job Performance Theory

1.1 Introduction

The understanding of the genesis and dynamics of linkages between individuals and organizations has clear impact on processes related to management. This knowledge affects policy formulation and the practice of human resources management.

Understanding psychological contracts and employees' organizational commitment is key to understanding employee-employer relationships. The study of this basic issue articulate important aspects for organizational performance. Another justification is to contribute to research on these concepts from a procedural perspective.

The scarcity of studies into understanding the development of both the psychological contract and organizational commitment over time, and how these constructs can be purposefully managed constitutes a major gap in research, hence the potential contribution of this thesis (Bastos, Maia, Rodrigues, Macambira & Borges-Andrade, 2014; Mowday, Porter & Steers, 1982, Morrow, 2011, Conway & Briner, 2005).

For the individuals involved, the promises made to them at work, identification and emotional involvement with the organization are just some of the aspects that can make a difference in their commitment and consequently the result for the organization. Nevertheless, for organizations knowledge, albeit incomplete or imperfect, about employee job performance and the set of factors that influence it may represent a competitive advantage. Studies that relate commitment, psychological contract and job performance are scarce and not conclusive. The lack of studies investigating this

relationship is a further justification for this thesis. Given these initial considerations, we present the main research problem:

How do Psychological Contract and Organizational Commitment develop over time and how are these constructs related to Job Performance?

1.2 Theoretical Frame

Psychological contract, organizational commitment and job performance are constructs that fall within the field of Organizational Behavior. This field focuses on the study of the structure and functioning of organizations and departments, groups and individuals. It is essential to understand the definition of organization, that goes beyond a mere aggregation of individuals.

Studies into organizational behavior can improve management processes, both in policy formulation and in the development of practices and more specific models of how to deal with individuals, their jobs, their relationships within teams and departments, their relationships with colleagues, subordinates and managers. The level of analysis of individual attitudes and behaviors is defined as the micro organizational behavior and is at this level that our research has been developed for this thesis.

In this part of the thesis, the definitions of psychological contract, organizational commitment and job performance will be presented and issues related to theoretical research models of each of these constructs will be briefly discussed. These are key issues that provide the general theoretical framework for the insertion of the four studies presented in the following chapters. Although fundamental, however, these issues only skim the scope of each of the studies, which have more specific goals.

1.2.1 Organizational Commitment

A comprehensive literature review on work commitment shows the emergence of various perspectives: one-dimensional views (Becker, 1960; Mowday et al., 1982), multidimensional (Etzioni, 1974; Meyer & Allen, 1991; O'Reilly & Chatman, 1986), attitudinal (Mowday et al., 1982) and behavioral (Staw, 1974); under different natures (Becker, 1960; Mowday et al., 1982; Wiener, 1982), focusing on different instances, such as organization, job, team, career, and labor union (Bastos & Borges-Andrade, 2002; Fink, 1992). Of these, the focus on the organization has been the most studied.

The first attempt to compile the studies focusing on organizational commitment was made by Mowday et al. (1982) in order to propose a model that would encompass theoretical developments already made. Thus, this construct was defined as a force that binds an individual to an organization, characterized by acceptance of organizational goals and values, the wish to remain as a member and exert effort on behalf of the organization. For many years, this meaning and the scale constructed by the authors were used extensively in an attitudinal-affective perspective.

Afterwards, Meyer and Allen (1991) designed a new model which emerged from various studies. This model consists of three bases that organize different kinds of organizational commitment. The affective commitment highlights the emotional nature that can connect the person to the organization, depending on the service expectations and personal needs. The instrumental commitment emphasizes an evaluation of gains and losses arising from changes that individuals make to the organization. The normative basis refers to the individual's sense of obligation to contribute to the organization.

The merit of this systematization of the concept is recognized and the three-dimensional model has become a benchmark for many researchers. Nevertheless, conceptual and empirical problems provoke discussion on the overlap of affective and normative commitments and on the empirical inconsistencies about the instrumental commitment, which has positive relationships with undesirable variables and negative relationships with desirable variables (Cooper-Hakim & Viswesvaran, 2005; Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch, & Topolnytsky, 2002; Rodrigues & Bastos, 2010). While affective commitment shows consequential desirable work behaviors, instrumental commitment shows no correlation or negative correlation with the same behaviors (Rowe, Bastos & Pinho, 2010; Solinger, Van Olffen & Roe, 2008).

The construct of entrenchment, proposed by Carson, Carson and Bedeian (1995) showed overlap with instrumental commitment (Rodrigues, 2009). Organizational entrenchment corresponds to the “tendency of the individual to remain due to possible investment losses and costs associated with exit and because of the perception of few alternatives outside the organization” (Rodrigues, 2009, p.75). According to Carson et al. (1995), entrenchment is not necessarily a problem for organizations. For this to become a problem, it would be necessary to add entrenchment, the dissatisfaction that may arise from this limitation of scope or from many other factors.

The analysis of the research agenda on the commitment identifies three main research perspectives: studies of antecedents and consequences of commitment and reflections on management commitment (Meyer et al., 2002; Bastos, Rodrigues & Pinho, 2010; Wright & Kehoe, 2009), the foci of commitment (Bastos, 1994a), the discussion of the conceptual and empirical issues (Rodrigues & Bastos, 2010; Solinger et al., 2008).

There is much research for the study of antecedents and consequences, however, they are rarely concerned with understanding the formation and dynamics of organizational commitment, which is the aim of this thesis. This is a gap which was highlighted a long time ago by Mowday et al. (1982) and after more than thirty years, the scenario described by these authors remains unchanged: “our understanding of the commitment process remains largely speculative” (Mowday et al., 1982, p. 71).

1.2.2 Psychological contracts

According to March and Simon (1958), if the organization takes into account the initial expectations of individuals, in turn, the tendency would be maintaining a high level of commitment. This exchange between individual and organization would be of an unwritten nature (March & Simon, 1958) and search for balance (Barnard, 1938).

According to Levinson, Price, Munday and Solley (1962), the psychological contract would be formed precisely for these mutual expectations (between organization and employee) which are not expressed more or less consciously. Schein (1982) discusses the nature of these expectations, which have their genesis in the needs of individuals.

Argyris (1960), the author who pioneered the use of the term “psychological work contract”, highlights the implicit nature, the unwritten and informal aspects of the employment relationship as a basis for the formation of the psychological contract.

We observe that despite the early definitions of the psychological contract at work that have prevailed since 1960 (Argyris, 1960, Levinson et al., 1962; Schein, 1965; Kotter, 1973), the construct only started to receive more attention from researchers in Organizational Behavior from the reformulation of the concept by Denise Rousseau (1989). She conceives the psychological contract as being formed by

individual beliefs regarding mutual obligations between that person and another party such as the employer (Rousseau, 1989).

The previous research addresses two main themes: the breaches and the violation of the psychological contract. A brief analysis of this scenario shows that the volume of research carried out since the reconceptualization of Rousseau is considerable, but the concept still lacks a more theoretical development that would grant it a certain maturity for there are many questions still unanswered.

The first conceptualizations of psychological contract were based on expectations. Rousseau changed this concept, assuming that a contract presupposes the idea of agreement, with a character of voluntary acceptance of its terms and implications for both parties: promises made and promises received. The concept of psychological contract is made up of both expectations and obligations, provided that they are accompanied by a belief that a promise was made (Conway & Briner, 2005, p. 24).

Employee's beliefs about reciprocal obligations between that employee and his or her organization, where these obligations are based on perceived promises and are not necessarily recognized by agents of the organization. (Morrison & Robinson, 1997, p. 229).

The recognition of these obligations is not necessary for the psychological contract (Rousseau, 1995). The psychological contract does not refer to what is actually exchanged, it is not what employees really give and receive from their employer, but the implicit and explicit obligations about this exchange.

A central aspect in the definition of psychological contract is its reciprocity. There are two sides in a psychological contract, the side of the employee and the employer. This bilateral aspect, although it is a point of consensus among researchers on the subject, is not always addressed in the design of research instruments. Some

researchers focus only on what the employee perceives that was promised to him/her by the organization (Lester, Turnley, Bloodgood, & Bolino, 2002; Robinson, 1996; Turnley & Feldman, 1999). This thesis will investigate the concept including the idea of reciprocity.

According to Guest (1998), although the psychological contract has typically been operationalized in terms of descriptive dimensions, for policy makers and administrators, the change in the content of the psychological contract is the main issue of interest. Therefore, by having the focus on changing the psychological contract over time and its effects on commitment, this thesis mainly works with the state of the psychological contract which is determined based on the fulfilment or not of its content (Guest & Conway, 2002).

The perception of non-fulfilment of these promises is understood as a breach of the psychological contract (Robinson & Morrison, 2000). Violation is a state of the psychological contract associated with breach, when it is accompanied by an emotional reaction. It is “an affective and emotional experience of disappointment, frustration, anger and resentment that may emanate from an employee’s interpretation of a contract breach and its accompanying circumstances.” (Morrison & Robinson, 1997, p. 242).

Meanwhile the unmet expectations may lead to a frustration in the individual, an unfulfilled promise goes further, creating a feeling of betrayal and breach of trust – violation (Culliname & Dundon, 2006). It is considered that the unmet expectations alone do not mean that the psychological contract has been violated because the violation involves other aspects such as loss of confidence and the reactions raised are more intensely negative than those invoked by unmet expectations (Robinson, Kraatz & Rousseau, 1994; Robinson, 1996).

One way to analyze the state of the psychological contract is by investigating the discrepancy between what was promised and what was delivered (Coyle-Shapiro & Kessler, 2003; Robinson, 1996). Another way is to directly question the extent to which the employer has fulfilled its obligations (Coyle-Shapiro & Kessler, 2003; Craig & Tetrick, 2001; Robinson & Morrison, 2000; Tekleab & Taylor, 2000; Turnley & Feldman, 1999).

According to Conway and Briner (2005), the psychological contract is a process that takes place through repeated cycles with each part fulfilling their promises to the other. For this, the investigation of the behavior of the construct over time through longitudinal studies is essential.

1.2.3 Job Performance

Performance may be viewed as something inherent in work and as such its origin dates back to the origin of the human species. This breadth in designing job performance as a human phenomenon may be a reason why, although the concept is one of the most investigated in the area of organizational behavior, it is also a subject of considerable heterogeneity in their theoretical conceptualization and operationalization methodological with a multitude of associated measures (Manning & Barrette, 2005; Iaffaldano & Muchinsky, 1985; Grote, 2003).

Traditionally, studies investigate the process of performance evaluation in organizational environments and their consequences, measures, nuances and biases. According to Sonnentag and Frese (2002, p. 5) “despite the great relevance of individual performance and the widespread use of job performance as an outcome

measure in empirical research, relatively little effort has been spent on clarifying the performance concept.”

The theoretical research models of job performance can be classified in several ways. Viswesvaran and Ones (2000) classified the theoretical models into four categories: models dedicated to the definition of specific dimensions; those that define job performance for specific positions or occupational categories; those developing various dimensions of job performance that are observable in any positions or occupations; and those which attempt to create metrics and tools for measuring job performance.

Sonnentag and Frese (2002) present three research perspectives: the first analyzes job performance from individual differences; the second analyzes from the situation; and the third perspective is of regulatory job performance. The perspective of individual differences investigates which individuals perform better than others and what differentiates their job performances. This perspective uses cognitive abilities, motivation, personality traits, length of service, work experience, among other aspects that characterize the individual as predictors for job performance. The situational perspective identifies situations in which individuals perform better and takes as predictors characteristics of the workplace, employment and organizational environment, possible stressors and motivational or situational constraints agents. The perspective of regulating performance investigates what happens when a person is performing.

Job performance is seen as multidimensional construct. Three propositions of multidimensionality are presented. The first is proposed by Bernardin and Beatty (1984), who created six dimensions for job performance: quality, quantity, time, cost efficiency, the need for supervision, and interpersonal impact. The second proposition

of multidimensionality is from a working meta-analysis of 486 measures for evaluating job performance of Viswesvaran (1993). This author proposed ten dimensions for performance: overall performance, productivity, effort, expertise in office; interpersonal competence, administrative competence, leadership, commitment to people, quality, and communication.

The third proposition views job performance as a two-dimensional concept: task and context. The task performance relates to the proficiency of the individual in contributing to the technical core of a position or occupation (Campbell, 1990; Borman & Motowidlo, 1993). With the advent of Taylorism and Fordism, job performance was considered the task required to meet the technical and instrumental requirements of each job behavior. Thus, the first theories about job performance tended to emphasize task performance, devaluing other behaviors that, although not directly linked to the implementation of the tasks, also contribute to the achievement of organizational goals.

These behaviors constitute another dimension of job performance, the contextual. According to Borman and Motowidlo (1993), five categories make up contextual performance: conducting activities beyond the formal requirements of the position; demonstration of enthusiasm and persistence of application when both are necessary for the performance of prescribed tasks, providing assistance to others, obedience to rules and procedures prescribed even though they may be inconvenient, and defending the interests of the organization. There are many variables that can somehow affect job performance. The fulfilment of the psychological contract and organizational commitment are among these factors.

1.3 Aims of this thesis

This thesis aims to advance our understanding of the psychological contract and organizational commitment as dynamic constructs, and the development of the relationship between these constructs and job performance over time.

1.3.1 Specific aims

- to examine changes in newcomers' psychological contract, to investigate how they occur and to determine how they result from interactions between fulfilment of employer and employee obligations. This specific aim will be addressed by the means of Study 1.
- to examine changes in newcomers' organizational commitment, to investigate how they occur and to determine how they result from individual characteristics and work experiences. This specific aim will be addressed by the means of Study 2.
- to examine how the fulfilment of the psychological contract (composed of employer and employee obligations) and affective organizational commitment are related to job performance. This specific aim will be addressed by the means of Study 3.
- to contribute to the understanding of the dynamic formation of the psychological contract and organizational commitment as a process and the relationship of these two constructs with job performance over time. This specific aim will be addressed by the means of Study 4.

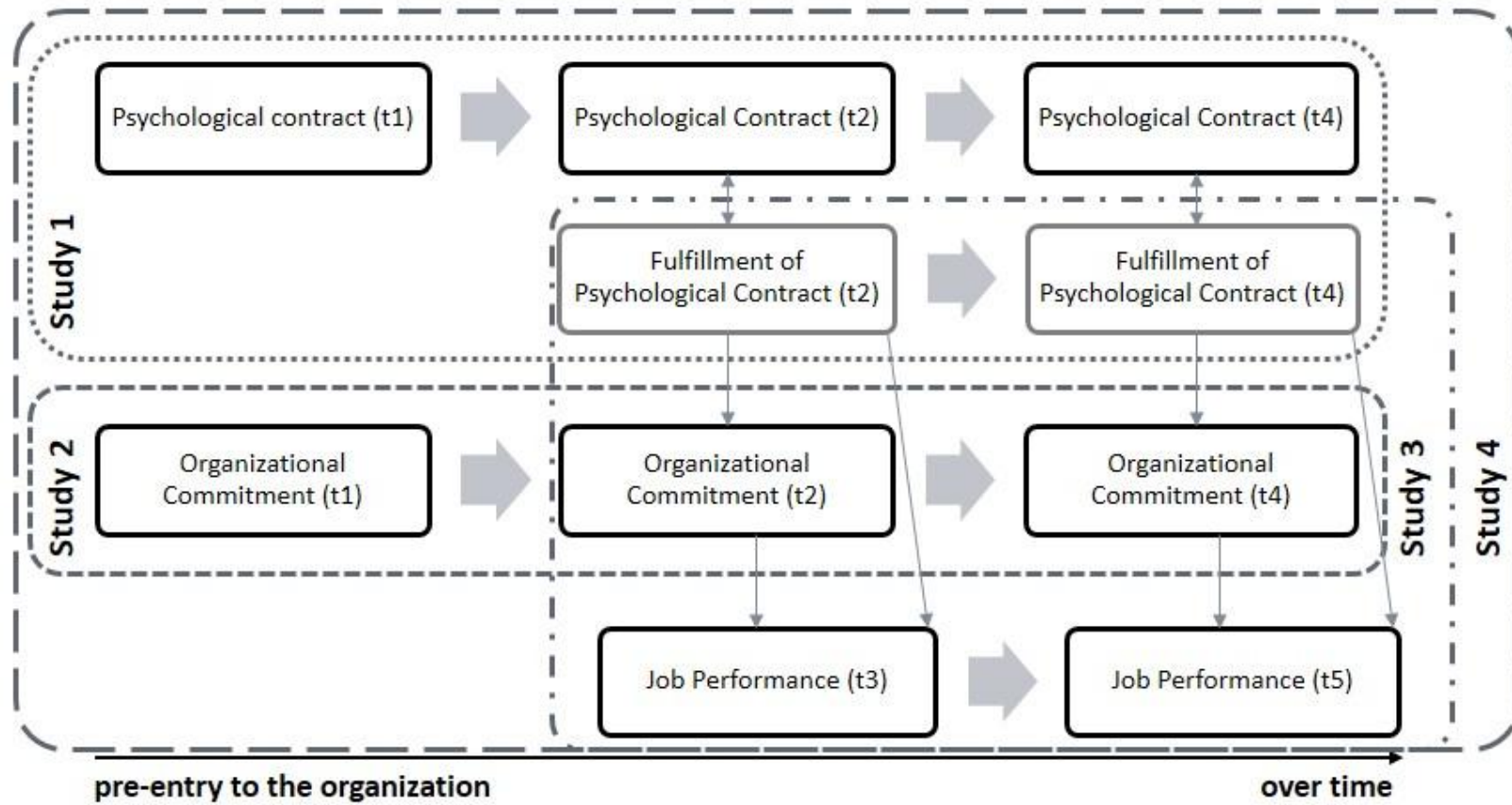
1.4 Overview of this thesis

To address the aforementioned research aims, this thesis presents three quantitative studies and one quanti-qualitative study. The four studies are presented in chapters 2 to 5. Each study is discussed separately in its respective chapter. Chapter 6 highlights the contributions to theory development, the discussion of managerial implications, limitations and suggestions for future research of all the studies. These studies have the objective of addressing distinct and unique aspects of the research problem.

In summary, the first two studies focus on the development of the psychological contract and organizational commitment, respectively. They seek to understand the changes that take place over the first three years of employment in relation to these two employee-organization linkages. The third study investigates the relationship between these two constructs and job performance. The fourth study unites all the studies, adding qualitative data to the analysis from interviews with the same individuals over the first three years of work in the organization.

Figure 1.1 provides an overview of the studies performed in this thesis, which is further clarified through the overview of the research questions and contributions presented in Table 1.1. Then, each of the studies is briefly presented.

Figure 1.1 Research framework



Note. 't' before a number indicates 'Time' (e.g., t1 = Time 1).

Table 1.1 Overview of studies

Studies	Specific research questions	Hypotheses / Research questions
1. Changes to newcomers' psychological contract: the interactive effects of the fulfilment of employer and employee obligations	How do changes in newcomers' psychological contract occur and are they related to the fulfilment of employer and employee obligations?	<p>H1: The perceived psychological contract obligations will change over time.</p> <p>H2: The greater the perception of fulfilment of employer obligations, (a) the greater employer obligations are perceived to be over time and (b) the less employer obligations will change over time.</p> <p>H3: The more the employee perceives him/herself as having fulfilled his/her own obligations, (a) the greater the employee will perceive his/her obligations to be over time and (b) the less his/her obligations will change over time.</p> <p>H4: The fulfilment of employee obligations will moderate the negative relationship between fulfilment and change in the perceived employer obligations, with a stronger relationship when fulfilment of employee obligations is low.</p> <p>H5: The fulfilment of employer obligations will moderate the negative relationship between fulfilment and change in the perceived employee obligations, with a stronger relationship when fulfilment of employer obligations is low.</p>

Studies	Specific research questions	Hypotheses / Research questions
2. Newcomers' Affective Organizational Commitment: A Latent Growth Modelling Approach to Understand Changes over the First 3 Years	How do changes in newcomers' organizational commitment occur and are they related to individual characteristics and work experiences?	<p>H1: The newcomers' affective organizational commitment will decrease in different ways in individuals during the first 3 years in the organization.</p> <p>H2: Age will be positively related to the Initial Status and to Change in AOC levels.</p> <p>H3. Work centrality will be related to the Initial Status and to Change in AOC levels.</p> <p>H4. Work values will be related to the Initial Status and to the Change in AOC levels.</p> <p>H5. The experiences at work will be related to the Change in AOC levels.</p>

Studies	Specific research questions	Hypotheses / Research questions
<p>3. Job Performance: the Longitudinal Effects of Psychological Contract Fulfilment and the Role of Affective Organizational Commitment within subjects</p>	<p>How are the fulfilment of psychological contract (composed of the employer and employee obligations) and affective organizational commitment related to job performance?</p>	<p>H1: The fulfilment of the psychological contract (Employer and Employee Obligations) will be positively related to (a) AOC and (b) job performance.</p> <p>H2: AOC will be weak and positively related to job performance.</p> <p>H3: Affective organizational commitment will partially mediate the relationship between fulfilment of the psychological contract and job performance.</p>
<p>4. Affective Organizational Commitment, Psychological Contract Fulfilment and Job Performance: a Longitudinal Within Subjects Quantitative Study of Newcomers Trajectories</p>	<p>To what extent may the developmental trajectories of organizational commitment result from changes in psychological contracts and affect individual job performance?</p>	<p>How do the fulfilment of psychological contract and work experience variables affect the newcomers' trajectories of organizational commitment?</p> <p>How are the trajectories of organizational commitment related to the job performance of newcomers?</p>

1.4.1 Study 1: Changes to newcomers' psychological contract

Study 1 examined changes in newcomers' psychological contracts. Based on the approach using psychological contract as a dynamic construct, we expected that the psychological contract would adapt as a function of the experiences encountered after entry into the organization. More specifically, we expected that the psychological contract would change based on the interaction between what the organization delivered and the employee gave in return. Data were collected in a Brazilian public sector agency in a three-wave longitudinal study among newcomers. We used latent growth curve modelling and hierarchical multiple regression to analyse the hypotheses. We found that especially when there is low fulfilment of the obligations in the psychological contract by both parties, employer and employee, change is most likely to occur. Moreover, the perception of the employees about the intensity of employer and employee obligations decreased over time. The results of Study 1 support the norm of reciprocity, showing the interactive effects of the fulfilment of employer and employee obligations, and that the highest level of change in psychological contracts occurred when fulfilment of the obligations of both parties was low.

1.4.2 Study 2: Newcomers' Affective Organizational Commitment

Study 2 examined changes in newcomers' affective organizational commitment (AOC) and found that the commitment decreased over time. The results of Study 2 suggest that changes tend to be more associated with work experiences than with individual characteristics. The data were collected in a Brazilian public sector agency in a three-wave longitudinal study among newcomers. We used latent growth curve modelling to analyse the hypotheses. Based on the approach using AOC as a dynamic construct, we expected that a person's characteristics and work experiences would be related to

change in AOC levels. We investigated the procedural nature of organizational commitment, and the results indicate that the AOC levels tend to decrease less in older individuals, those who value the work goal of serving society, those who had been promoted, those who had job rotation (i.e. been moved around to different departments or positions), and those who work in a department with a better organizational climate. These findings provide an insight into the dynamics of AOC as a process.

1.4.3 Study 3: Newcomers' Job Performance and the relationship with Affective Organizational Commitment and Psychological Contract Fulfilment

Study 3 examined how the combination of psychological contract fulfilment (composed of employer and employee obligations) and Affective Organizational Commitment (AOC) affect job performance. The hypotheses were discussed using data from 202 employees and their line managers in a Brazilian public sector agency in a four-wave longitudinal study. We used structural equation modelling to analyse the hypotheses. Fulfilment of the psychological contract explained about 40% of AOC's variance and about 5% of job performance's. The results of Study 3 show that when analysed separately, AOC has no predictive power with respect to job performance. Together in a mediation model, the variables of psychological contract fulfilment and AOC explain about 7% of the variance in job performance. That is, the addition of AOC as a mediating variable to the model increases the explanatory power regarding the variance in job performance in about 2%. In a longitudinal mediation model, AOC had 86.3% of the variance explained, while job performance had 12.3%. Implications of the findings for organizations and future research are discussed.

1.4.4 Study 4: Newcomers' Affective Organizational Commitment, Psychological Contract Fulfilment and Job Performance

Study 4 reports the findings of a longitudinal quanti-qualitative study that followed the development of the psychological contract, organizational commitment and job performance of newcomers during the first three years of their work in a Brazilian public sector agency. The research questions were discussed using data from 18 interviews conducted with six employees three times each. Study 4 complements a longitudinal quantitative survey conducted in parallel, the results of which were partly used to identify developmental trajectories of organizational commitment among participants. We analysed the interviews according to the four patterns of trajectories identified. The results of Study 4 show how these three constructs develop over time and how the fulfilment of the psychological contract and organizational commitment are related to job performance. Study 4 provides insights that can contribute to the comprehension of these relationships. The implications of the findings for organizations are discussed in terms of their special potential contribution to the contexts of job security and limited performance-pay.

There is nothing permanent except change.
No man ever steps in the same river twice, for it is not the
same river and he is not the same man.

Heraclitus

Study 1

Chapter 2: Changes to newcomers' psychological contract: the interactive effects of the fulfilment of employer and employee obligations – Study 1

2.1 Introduction

Understanding psychological contracts is key to understanding employee-employer relationships. The psychological contract refers to the “individual beliefs, shaped by the organization, regarding terms of an exchange agreement between individuals and their organization” (Rousseau, 1995, p.9). The formation of the psychological contract begins at the moment in which someone accepts to work at an organization. Over time, the individual starts to understand which of the pre-existing expectations – from even before the thought of working in that organization – encounter support. Gradually, these obligations that establish the psychological contract will take the form of a mental model (Rousseau, 2001). The formation of a newcomers' psychological contract and the changes during the process of adaptation is a relevant issue that remains an under-explored topic (see for exceptions De Vos, Buyens & Schalk, 2003; Robinson et al., 1994; Tekleab, Orvis & Taylor, 2013).

A central aspect in the definition of the psychological contract is the idea of two-sided exchange and reciprocity. The employee perceives his/her own obligations toward the employer as well the obligations of the employer towards themselves. These perceptions indicate how the content of the psychological contract develops over time. They also perceive the fulfilment of these two types of obligations. These perceptions indicate the state of the psychological contract (Guest, 2004), whether it has been fulfilled or not. Therefore, the psychological contract refers to the perceived employer and employee obligations, and it is affected by the perception of the fulfilment of these obligations. We expect the psychological contract to change depending on its fulfilment

over time. The bilateral aspect of the psychological contract that covers employer and employee obligations, although widely acknowledged by scholars, is rarely addressed in the design of research. Even rarer is addressing the content and state of the two parties in the psychological contract.

The relationships among four aspects of psychological contract are analysed in this study: the perception of the employee about employer obligations, his/her own obligations, and the perceived fulfilment of both of these. The psychological contract is constantly renewed and adjusted over time. From moments of deception or pleasant surprises, individuals will adjust their beliefs in light of the perceived reality. However, it is still unclear how these changes in the psychological contract come about. More specifically, it has been proposed that psychological contracts consist of both employer and employee obligations, and changes in psychological contracts have been primarily framed as resulting from employer under- or over-fulfilment.

On the one hand, fulfilment of employer obligations affects how employees perceive their own obligations (Coyle-Shapiro & Kessler 2002; De Vos et al., 2003; Robinson et al., 1994). On the other hand, fulfilment of employee obligations is likely to lead to higher perceptions of the employer's obligations towards the employee. In this study, however, we argue that changes in psychological contracts do not merely result from what the employer does for the employee, but from the interaction between employer and employee fulfilment, that is, the reciprocal exchanges between what the employer does for the employee and what the employee does in return. We expect that the perceptions that employees have of the mutual obligations arise not only from what the employer does for them, but also in comparison with what they did for their employer. Hence, greater changes in the psychological contract will occur when not only the employer fails to fulfil its obligations, but also when the employee does not

deliver his/her part of the deal.

The aims of this study are therefore to examine changes in newcomers' psychological contract, to investigate how they occur and to determine how it results from interactions between employer and employee obligations fulfilment. In this study, we focus on the discussion about the way newcomers change their psychological contract according to the reality they experience after entry and if it occurs in function of adaptation and reciprocity.

While previous studies have yielded a wealth of knowledge regarding the psychological contract and its breaches, violations, and attendant antecedents and consequences, the fact is that a basic, yet fundamental premise underlying this cumulative knowledge has remained relatively unexamined. More specifically, does an individual experience meaningful (as opposed to random) changes in his or her level of psychological contract to the organization over time? If so, is the change truly a critical index in that the individual alters his or her actions within or toward the organization as a direct function of that change? In order to address these questions, we carried out a three-year study including time lags of one and two years, among employees working at a Brazilian public sector agency.

2.2 Psychological Contract Theory

Time is an important factor in the research of psychological contracts: "time is the single most important cause of contract change" (Rousseau, 1995, p.142). Time is important because besides the changes in the outside world, the contract parties themselves are continuously maturing their ways of understanding the psychological contract terms (Rousseau, 1995). Investigation regarding the development of the

psychological contract over time is vital to the understanding of this construct as a predicting variable of other variables, such as commitment, performance, and turnover (Bal, Chiaburu & Jansen, 2010; Bal, Lange, Zacher & Heijden, 2013; Ng, Feldman & Lam, 2010; Tekleab et al., 2013).

The approach of psychological contract as a set of beliefs characterizes it as relatively stable and durable mental model, suggesting that psychological contracts can be resilient, experiencing only incremental transformations over time (Rousseau, 2001). The approach of the psychological contract as a process of negotiation and agreement suggests that the set of beliefs that comprise the psychological contract adapts over time in accordance with a series of external contextual factors.

In this study, we examine the psychological contract as a dynamic process. The reciprocal nature of the content of the psychological contract is still insufficiently conceptualized. The studies that treat the construct as a process suggest that changes in the psychological contract occur in accordance with several factors (Dabos & Rousseau, 2004; Mclean Parks, Kidder & Gallagher, 1998; Rousseau & Tijoriwala, 1998; Thomas, Au & Ravlin, 2003).

The scarce existing longitudinal studies support the idea that newcomers change their perceptions of psychological contract according to the reality they experience after entry. Nevertheless, there is no consensus on the way it changes. Tekleab et al. (2013) examined the change in the employer-based psychological contract obligations and its relationship to employee attitudes during the employee's first year of employment and found that newcomers' perceptions of employer obligations decrease over time. These findings are contradictory to the prior work of De Vos et al. (2003), Thomas and Anderson (1998), and Robinson et al. (1994). De Vos et al. (2003) found increasing obligations over time. Thomas and Anderson (1998) compared newcomers' perceptions

with employees that had at least six years of service and found that the employees with more than six years of service had higher expectations than the newcomers had.

Robinson et al. (1994) found that newcomers expected more from their employers and that employees' perceived obligations to their employers declined over the first two years of employment. This single study examined the directionality of changes in employees' perceived obligations. The aim of this study, however, is to examine changes so, first, we will investigate if there are changes and what kind of changes, which will be examined by means of the first hypothesis:

H1: The perceived employer and employee obligations in psychological contract will change over time.

The psychological contract develops by means of recurring cycles with each party keeping or breaching their promises to the other. When people are faced with the choice of how to respond to these experiences of breach or fulfilment, they try to make sense of it in a meaningful way. Responding to contract breach and fulfilment is essentially a sense-making process (Louis, 1980). If promises are broken, an uncomfortable psychological dissonance leads the individual to wonder whether their perceptions need to be adjusted.

During the process of psychological contract adjustment, the incompatibility between a person's beliefs and the knowledge of what actually has been delivered motivates the person to adjust his/her beliefs and changes the perceived mutual obligations. On the other hand, if the obligations are fulfilled, there is consonance in having similar expectations for the future, which means fewer changes to the

psychological contract. The fulfilment of the employer obligations leads to a greater sense of obligation by the employee, because the employee and employer are engaged in an exchange relationship (Bal et al., 2010). In relation to the psychological contract, reciprocity means that both employer and employee have obligations towards each other. Moreover, the higher the employer fulfilment, the less likely the psychological contract is to change, because the employer and the employee commit each other to the relationship.

Accordingly, we expect change in a psychological contract to be determined by its state of fulfilment over time (Guest & Conway, 2002). The study by De Vos et al. (2003) showed that newcomers changed their perceptions of employer obligations based on what they actually received from the employer, and they found support to the same relationship for content and fulfilment of employee obligations. Lester, Kickul and Bergmann's (2007) results supported the proposition that psychological contract fulfilment is a determinant for the perception of psychological contract type over time. In this study, we build upon these earlier studies, and expect that fulfilment of both employer and employee obligations are related to perceived obligations over time, and at the same time lower changes in the psychological contract over time. Therefore, we propose the following hypotheses:

H2. The greater the perception of fulfilment of employer obligations, (a) the greater employer obligations are perceived to be over time and (b) the less employer obligations will change over time.

H3. The more the employee perceives him/herself as having fulfilled his/her own obligations, (a) the greater the employee will perceive his/her obligations to be over time and (b) the less his/her obligations will change over time.

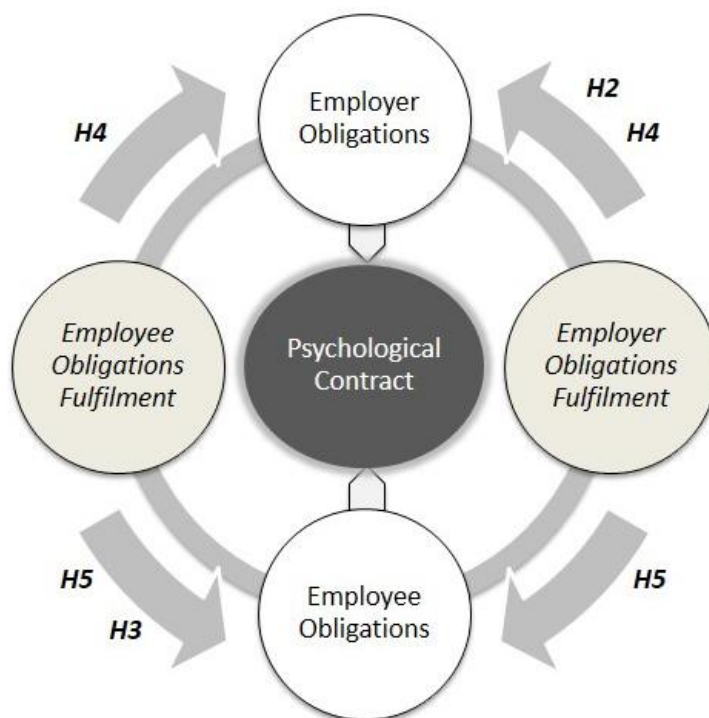
It is important to highlight that most research focuses solely on the perceptions of employer obligations, although the conceptualization of the psychological contract is built on the idea of reciprocity. Dabos and Rousseau (2004) investigated reciprocity, incorporating the employer's perspective and comparing the beliefs of employees and employer representatives. They found that the consistency between the two perspectives was positively related to productivity, career advancement and intention to continue working with the employer. Although they did not analyse the changes in psychological contract in function of reciprocity, their findings offer support to the norm of reciprocity, by the employees responding to more consistent psychological contracts with work attitudes and behaviours.

The extent to which changes in the psychological contract occur and the employees will reciprocate the obligations of the employer depends on whether the employer fulfils its obligations (Gouldner, 1960). We expect that the change in the psychological contract may result from perceptions of fulfilment of both employer and employee obligations. Moreover, the perceived fulfilment of employer obligations will likely interact with the perceived fulfilment of employee obligations to determine the changes in the psychological contract, because they are more likely to occur as a result from the combination of both high or low employer and employee fulfilment.

De Vos et al. (2003) examined the changes as a function of the reciprocity norm by the comparing promises and inducements/contributions of one part in relation to the other and their findings supported the validity of the norm of reciprocity. The findings of these authors show that a part fits the perceived promises that make up the psychological contract depending on the fulfilment of the promises of the other party. Coyle-Shapiro and Kessler's (2002) findings also provide empirical support for the norm of reciprocity by the means of positive associations between the perceived

obligations of one part and the fulfilment of obligations of the other part of the psychological contract. We expect to find support to the norm of reciprocity. Furthermore, building on upon prior research, we expect that the fulfilment of both parties' obligations will interact in prediction of change in the perceived obligations of each party, as presented formally in our fourth and fifth hypotheses and represented in Figure 2.1.

Figure 2.1 Representation of changes in Psychological Contract as a dynamic process of sense making and reciprocity



H4. The fulfilment of employee obligations will moderate the negative relationship between fulfilment and change in the perceived employer obligations, with stronger relationship when fulfilment of employee obligations is low.

H5. The fulfilment of employer obligations will moderate the negative relationship between fulfilment and change in the perceived employee obligations, with stronger relationship when fulfilment of employer obligations is low.

2.3 Method

2.3.1 Sample and procedure

The population consists of newcomers who passed in the competitive selection process that took place in 2010 to select civil servants for a Brazilian public sector agency. The degree of difficulty of this selection process was high, with on average 156 applicants per vacancy. The organizational context consists of high job security and relatively high earnings. The agency has units in ten Brazilian cities and about 4,000 employees. The population is made up of 361 newcomers who share about the same date of entry to the organization. They were hired with an employment contract starting around August 2010, subject to a probationary period of three years.

They were informed about this research during the orientation training. They received the invitation by e-mail during the orientation training before entry (t1= Time 1), approximately one year after entry (t2), and approximately three years after entry (t3). This survey length was chosen to cover the probationary period, which is three years. This is the mandatory term for Brazilian public civil servants to gain a permanent contract. So that the study of changes in the psychological contract could be done in a comprehensive way, also covering the way that it starts to develop, this longitudinal within subjects study was initiated just before the entry of the individual to the organization. To secure representative participation in multiple data collections and avoid sample attrition, we decided to do only three assessments. Moreover, in the third

collection an incentive was offered, all of them participated in a raffle for three music players.

In the invitation e-mail, a text presented the study along with an external link to the questionnaire. The text reinforced the fact that it was a survey independent of the human resources department of the organization, conducted under academic supervision with the researchers responsible identified. Participation in the study was voluntary and confidentiality was formally guaranteed. The emails were individually customized with a different link for each participant. The respondents' identification made it possible to merge the results. After finishing the data collection, respondents were coded into numbers. The respondent did not have access to the answers of previous collections.

The first survey was filled out by 335 newcomers, 251 filled out the first and second and 202 newcomers participated in all three surveys (56 per cent response rating). Twenty-four employees left the organization (8 per cent) during the length of this study, three were temporarily transferred to another public agency and one had deceased. Analyses concerning changes were conducted using the data from those who responded to all surveys. The mean age of respondents was 36 years ($SD=7.5$), 26.7 per cent were female, 34.2 per cent were single and 68.1 per cent had no children. It is a highly educated population, considering that all respondents had at least a University degree and 66% some kind of postgraduate degree.

To investigate the possibility of bias produced by attrition, some preliminary analyses were conducted. Comparison of the participants of the full study and those who stopped did not show any detectable differences on the demographic characteristics or outlying responses in the resultant sample. The conclusion was that respondent attrition did not appear to create any sort of bias in the variables for this study.

2.3.2 Measures and measurement invariance

The psychological contract was calibrated with an instrument developed for this study. The items were developed based in the measures of Sels, Janssens, and Van Den Brande (2004), Kickul, Lester and Finkl (2002), Herriot, Manning and Kidd (1997) and management practices of the participating organization (Guzzo & Noonan, 1994). The measure of Sels et al. (2004) was applied in Brazil by Rios (2007), and the results were helpful to the process of development of this instrument. Detailed information about the construction and validation of the instrument are described in Maia and Bastos (2014).

We assessed the Employer and Employee Obligations at Times 1, 2 and 3, using a Likert Scale ranging from 1= strongly disagree to 5= strongly agree. Illustrative items are “I believe my employer has the obligation to consider not only the end result, but also my personal effort”, and “I believe I have the obligation to invest time and energy in this firm”. We assessed the Psychological Contract Fulfilment at Times 2 and 3 by asking respondents to indicate on a 5-point scale, ranging from ‘not at all’ to ‘overcame’.

All measures showed acceptable reliabilities through the times, the Cronbach’s alphas for scales ranged from 0.78 to 0.87 (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). Exploratory principal component analysis and psychometric properties of the Measures are shown in Appendix C. In order to confirm validity of the constructs, confirmatory factor analyses on data were carried out with AMOS 21 (Appendix D). The model indicated a satisfactory fit for both Employer and Employee Obligations Scales over time (Schumacker & Lomax, 2010). The data screening for unengaged responses and outliers lead to deletion of five cases.

To verify the prerequisites to conducting an analysis of longitudinal change, the normality of the distribution and the presence of outliers were investigated. We verified

also the longitudinal measurement invariance (Vandenberg & Lance, 2000). First, we confirmed the configural invariance (i.e. equivalent factor structures) for both Employer and Employee Obligations Scales. The test for metric invariance resulted that for the Employer Obligations Scale, the chi square difference test comparing the completely unconstrained model and the full measurement invariance model across the three times was non-significant ($\Delta\chi^2=30.736$, $\Delta df=20$, $p=.069$), but for the Employee Obligations Scale the test indicated significant differences.

Although the Employee Obligations Scale was invariant between Times 1 and 2 ($\Delta\chi^2=11.711$, $\Delta df=10$, $p=.305$), it was not between Times 2 and 3. The source of the measurement variance was located in two items at Time 3, while all the other factor loadings all times could safely be argued to be invariant. The variant items were “present a workload appropriate, taking into account the conditions and complexity of my activities”, and “develop my activities with the required quality”. Eigenvalues from the exploratory principal components analysis indicated that the employees perceived their own obligations in the psychological contract to be a more unified construct in Time 3 than before (in Time 3 the Eigenvalue was 4.29, explaining 43% of total variance, while in Time 2 was 3.75, explaining 37%). We evaluated not worth deleting these items from the Scale, despite the fact that caution is needed in interpreting the results of changes in perceived employee obligations between Times 2 and 3.

2.3.3 Analytic Strategy

We used latent growth curve modelling (LGM) with Amos Version 21 to analyse the first hypothesis (Duncan, Duncan & Strycker, 2006). LGM using structural equation modelling can test both individual and group changes using slopes and intercepts

(Schumacker & Lomax, 2010). We entered the study variables into a basic LGM model. Satisfactory model fit was indicated when chi square (χ^2) was non-significant, the comparative fit index (CFI) was greater than .90, the standardized root mean-square (SRMR) was less than .10, and the root mean-square error of approximation (RMSEA) was less than .08 (Schumacker & Lomax, 2010, Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). We used the chi square difference test to compare the models. Further, to investigate the changes, we conducted paired-samples *t*-tests to compare the means for each item over time (Hair, Black, Babin & Anderson, 2010). We then investigated the changes in perceived obligations in function of the fulfilment.

According to Menard (2002), there are two ways of measure change in continuous scales: the raw change, which is the difference between the later score and the earlier score, and the residual gain, calculated by linear regression of the variable in the later time on the same variable in the earlier time. First, we conducted hierarchical multiple regression analyses with SPSS Version 21 for employer and employee obligations, controlling for the value of the same obligations in the earlier time (Cohen, Cohen, West & Aiken, 2003). Second, we conducted regression analyses for the calculated variable of Change, indirectly assessed by the comparison of the perceived obligations among times.

The raw change scores are effective for comparing an individual to his or herself over time, especially when the scores of some individuals might be increasing over time whereas the scores of other might be decreasing over time. According to Rogosa (1988), change scores represent an unbiased estimate of true change. Because it is a five-point scale, the differences scores ranged from -4 to 4, in which negative values mean a decrease in perceived obligations and positive, an increase. The scale ranging from -4 to 4 was first tested, but the results were not as significant as those obtained with the

absolute value of gap later tested, presumably due to the significant excess of kurtosis that the resultant distribution ranging from -4 to 4 shown. By choosing the absolute value gap, we obtained more robust results. Besides this, it was possible to keep the same scale for all variables, with similar meanings, just by doing the linear transformation adding 1 to all. The result was the variable of Change, ranging from 1= no change to 5= intensive change. Finally, we analysed the interactions between employer and employee fulfilment in predicting change to the psychological contract. Scores were centered before interactions were calculated (Aiken & West, 1991).

2.4 Results

Table 2.1 reports descriptive statistics, correlations, and Cronbach's alphas for all scales. To test hypotheses 1 for Employer Obligations, we compared two alternative models: (1) freely estimated model and (2) no growth model, in which we constrained the slope mean to be equal to zero, meaning that there would be no change over time in perceived obligations. The freely estimated model demonstrated excellent fit (χ^2 (df=3, N=198)=1.590, p=.662; CFI=1.000; SRMR=.017; RMSEA=.000). The unacceptable fit for the no growth model (χ^2 (df=4, N=198)=13.643, p=.000; CFI=.171; SRMR=.039; RMSEA=.253), and the chi square difference test ($\Delta\chi^2 = 52.982$, $\Delta df=1$, p=.000) provided support for hypothesis 1 concerning the Employer Obligations.

Table 2.1 Means, standard deviations (SD), correlations, and Cronbach's alphas for the study variables

Variable	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1. ER (t1)	4.39	.46	(.83)												
2. ER (t2)	4.27	.53	.31**	(.85)											
3. ER (t3)	4.03	.58	.30**	.41**	(.87)										
4. EE (t1)	4.72	.29	.55**	.32**	.26**	(.80)									
5. EE (t2)	4.65	.37	.22**	.55**	.32**	.31**	(.80)								
6. EE (t3)	4.40	.47	.28**	.27**	.64**	.29**	.45**	(.84)							
7. ERF (t2)	3.25	.54	.13+	.21**	.16*	.08	.25**	.29**	(.83)						
8. ERF (t3)	3.32	.58	.14*	.20**	.18**	.11+	.19**	.26**	.63**	(.87)					
9. EEF (t2)	3.83	.39	.10	.34**	.13+	.10	.40**	.20**	.32**	.25**	(.78)				
10. EEF (t3)	3.86	.46	.14*	.30**	.22**	.25**	.38**	.36**	.31**	.41**	.60**	(.85)			
11. ERC (t2)	1.63	.40	-.41**	-.64**	-.16*	-.22**	-.34**	-.15*	-.12+	-.18**	-.22**	-.25**			
12. ERC (t3)	1.68	.43	-.12+	-.47**	-.41**	-.07	-.31**	-.24**	-.18**	-.18**	-.28**	-.32**	.49**		
13. EEC (t2)	1.37	.33	-.34**	-.47**	-.26**	-.47**	-.81**	-.37**	-.13*	-.16*	-.24**	-.36**	.40**	.35**	
14. EEC (t3)	1.49	.35	-.16*	-.32**	-.46**	-.09	-.44**	-.73**	-.28**	-.20**	-.28**	-.39**	.33**	.48**	.45**

Notes. ER= Employer Obligations; EE= Employee Obligations; ERF= Employer Obligations Fulfilment; EEF= Employee Obligations Fulfilment; ERC= Employer Obligations Change; EEC= Employee Obligations Change. 't' before a number indicates 'Time' (e.g., t1 = Time 1). N=240, for Time 1 x Time 2. N=197, for Time 2 x Time 3. All the variables are expressed on a 5-point scale, Cronbach's alphas for scales appear on the diagonal parentheses. +p<.10, *p<.05, **p<.01.

The freely estimated model for the Employee Obligations demonstrated not bad fit (χ^2 (df=3, N=198)=10.041, $p=.018$; CFI=.890; SRMR=.026; RMSEA=.109), but the no growth model did much worse (χ^2 (df=4, N=198)=80.941, $p=.000$; CFI=.000; SRMR=.057; RMSEA=.312). The chi square difference test ($\Delta\chi^2=70.900$, $\Delta df=1$, $p=.000$) also supported hypothesis 1 concerning the Employee Obligations.

The Employer Obligations had an intercept mean of 4.382, $p<.000$ and a variance of .066, $p<.01$. The slope coefficient was -.112, $p<.000$, with a non-significant variance of .001. The Employee Obligations had an intercept mean of 4.735, $p<.000$ and a variance of .021, $p<.05$. The slope coefficient was -.106, $p<.000$, with a variance of .010, $p<.01$.

Table 2.2 presents the results of the paired-samples *t*-tests. Among those employer obligations that presented significant difference between Times 1 and 2, only one had a positive difference: “provides autonomy to do my job” (mean difference = 0.137, SD = 0.061, $t= 2.259$, $p<0.05$).

Among the employee obligations, also only one item presented an increasing significant difference: “adjust easily to changes in my work situation” (mean difference = 0.178, SD = 0.060, $t= 2.966$, $p<0.01$). All the other items that had significant differences decreased from Time 1 to Time 2. Comparing Times 2 and 3, all the employer and employee obligations decreased significantly.

Table 2.2 Means, standard deviations and paired-sample tests for employer and employee obligations

Items	T1		T2		T3		T2 – T1		T3 –T2	
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
<i>Employer Obligations</i>										
offers me an intellectually stimulating work	4.60	.65	4.26	.85	3.98	.91	-5.33	.000	-3.12	.002
offers me a job that requires originality and creativity	3.93	.89	3.58	1.04	3.39	1.02	-4.35	.000	-2.19	.030
allows me to be myself within this firm	4.14	.81	3.88	.94	3.61	.97	-3.82	.000	-3.47	.001
considers not only the end result, but also my personal effort	4.27	.85	4.15	1.00	3.91	.94	-1.92	.057	-3.27	.001
provides autonomy to do my job	4.15	.73	4.27	.82	4.03	.82	2.26	.025	-3.22	.001
does not underestimate my capacity to work	4.63	.75	4.63	.68	4.49	.67	0.15	<i>n.s.</i>	-2.31	.022
puts employees in locations consistent with their professional features	4.53	.64	4.56	.62	4.37	.73	0.36	<i>n.s.</i>	-3.04	.003
recognizes the importance of what I do	4.59	.63	4.52	.69	4.33	.74	-1.37	<i>n.s.</i>	-2.69	.008
takes into account my opinions	4.30	.73	4.23	.82	3.92	.82	-1.14	<i>n.s.</i>	-4.30	.000
provides an environment of cooperation among coworkers	4.68	.55	4.60	.70	4.44	.74	-0.86	<i>n.s.</i>	-2.56	.011
<i>Employee Obligations</i>										
bring own ideas and creativity into this firm	4.67	0.55	4.51	0.74	4.24	0.79	-2.96	.003	-4.45	.000
want to develop myself in this firm	4.89	0.36	4.56	0.82	4.21	0.89	-6.06	.000	-5.90	.000
strive to fulfil the goals pre-established	4.93	0.27	4.88	0.45	4.72	0.53	-1.67	.096	-3.54	.000
clearly state what is important to me in my work	4.45	0.71	4.34	0.80	4.02	0.94	-1.97	.050	-3.90	.000
invest time and energy in this firm	4.87	0.36	4.63	0.64	4.32	0.80	-5.47	.000	-5.37	.000
adjust easily to changes in my work situation	4.23	0.76	4.41	0.74	4.16	0.82	2.97	.003	-4.08	.000
present a workload appropriate, taking into account the conditions and complexity of my activities	4.87	0.34	4.85	0.46	4.65	0.61	-0.46	<i>n.s.</i>	-3.91	.000
develop my activities with the required quality	4.94	0.23	4.94	0.25	4.81	0.42	-0.00	<i>n.s.</i>	-4.41	.000
complete the work within the specified	4.76	0.44	4.79	0.52	4.65	0.58	0.71	<i>n.s.</i>	-3.22	.002
deal with unpredictable events in my work situation	4.59	0.56	4.63	0.59	4.30	0.69	1.18	<i>n.s.</i>	-6.59	.000

Notes. 'T' before a number indicates 'Time' (e.g., T1 = Time 1). M=Mean. SD= Standard Deviation. N=240, for Time 1 x Time 2. N=197, for Time 2 x Time

Hypotheses 2-5 were tested using hierarchical multiple regression analyses. For employer and employee obligations, controlling for the value of the same obligations in the earlier Time, the relationship between the fulfilment and content of psychological contract was assessed. A significant increase in R^2 at the second step indicates that the fulfilment is related to a change in the psychological contract content.

Table 2.3 Fulfilment predicting Psychological Contract Content

Independent variables	Employer Obligations		Employee Obligations	
	Dependent variables		Dependent variables	
	Step 1	Step 2	Step 1	Step 2
	ER (t2)		EE (t2)	
ER (t1)	.314***	.292***	EE (t1)	.311*** .275***
ERF (t2)		.173**	EEF (t2)	.370***
ΔR^2	.099	.030	ΔR^2	.096 .136
Adjusted R^2	.095	.121	Adjusted R^2	.093 .226
F	26.141***	17.492***	F	25.523*** 36.013***
ΔF	26.141***	8.070**	ΔF	25.523*** 42.113***
	ER (t3)		EE (t3)	
ER (t2)	.408***	.401***	EE (t2)	.448*** .389***
ERF (t3)		.037 <i>n.s.</i>	EEF (t3)	.155*
ΔR^2	.166	.001	ΔR^2	.200 .021
Adjusted R^2	.162	.159	Adjusted R^2	.196 .213
F	39.134***	19.657***	F	49.084*** 27.644***
ΔF	39.134***	.317 <i>n.s.</i>	ΔF	49.084*** 5.161*

Notes. ER= Employer Obligations; EE= Employee Obligations; ERF= Employer Obligations Fulfilment; EEF= Employee Obligations Fulfilment. R^2 = variance explained. F= significance statistic. All scales were centered. Standardized regression coefficients are reported (β). + $p < .10$. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$. N=240, for Time 1 x Time 2. N=197, for Time 2 x Time 3.

Table 2.3 presents the results concerning hypothesis 2a and 3a. Hypothesis 2a proposed that the greater the perception of employer fulfilment, the greater the employer obligations would be perceived over time. This hypothesis was supported during the Time 2 ($\beta = .173$, $\Delta R^2 = .030$, $\Delta F = 8.070$, $p < 0.01$), and it did not find support in Time 3. Hence, hypothesis 2a is partially supported.

Hypothesis 3a analyses the same relations for the employee side. During both stages statistically significant increases in R^2 were obtained; during the first year:

$\beta=.370$, $\Delta R^2=.136$, $\Delta F=42.113$, $p<0.001$, and at the end of 3-year-probationary period:

$\beta=.155$, $\Delta R^2=.021$, $\Delta F=5.161$, $p<0.05$. Hence, hypothesis 3a is fully supported.

Table 2.4 presents the results concerning hypothesis 2b, 3b, 4 and 5.

Table 2.4 Interaction of Fulfilment Employer and Employee Obligations predicting Psychological Contract Change

Independent variables	Dependent variables		
	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
	Employer Obligations Change Time 2 – Time 1		
Employer Obligations Fulfilment (ERF) <i>t2</i>	-.123+	-.058 n.s.	-.098 n.s.
Employee Obligations Fulfilment (EEF) <i>t2</i>		-.201**	-.081 n.s.
ERF (<i>t2</i>) x EEF (<i>t2</i>)			.301***
ΔR^2	.015	.036	.078
Adjusted R^2	.011	.043	.118
F	3.655+	6.413**	11.706***
ΔF	3.655+	9.047**	21.203***
	Employer Obligations Change Time 3 – Time 2		
Employer Obligations Fulfilment (ERF) <i>t3</i>	-.184**	-.080 n.s.	-.173*
Employee Obligations Fulfilment (EEF) <i>t3</i>		-.294***	-.154*
ERF (<i>t3</i>) x EEF (<i>t3</i>)			.354***
ΔR^2	.034	.076	.107
Adjusted R^2	.029	.101	.204
F	6.832**	12.011***	17.837***
ΔF	6.832**	16.645***	26.365***
	Employee Obligations Change Time 2 – Time 1		
Employee Obligations Fulfilment (EEF) <i>t2</i>	-.245***	-.228***	-.131+
Employer Obligations Fulfilment (ERF) <i>t2</i>		-.055 n.s.	-.087 n.s.
EEF (<i>t2</i>) x ERF (<i>t2</i>)			.245***
ΔR^2	.060	.003	.051
Adjusted R^2	.056	.055	.103
F	15.317***	7.989***	10.200***
ΔF	15.317***	.683 n.s.	13.765***
	Employee Obligations Change Time 3 – Time 2		
Employee Obligations Fulfilment (EEF) <i>t3</i>	-.394***	-.370***	-.291***
Employer Obligations Fulfilment (ERF) <i>t3</i>		-.068 n.s.	-.120+
EEF (<i>t3</i>) x ERF (<i>t3</i>)			.199**
ΔR^2	.155	.004	.034
Adjusted R^2	.151	.150	.180
F	35.955***	18.450***	15.443***
ΔF	35.955***	.953 n.s.	8.088**

Notes. Psychological contract scales were centered. Standardized regression coefficients are reported (β). + $p<.10$. * $p<.05$. ** $p<.01$. *** $p<.001$. N=240, for Time 1 x Time 2. N=197, for Time 2 x Time 3.

Hypothesis 2b proposed that the greater the perception of fulfilment of employer obligations, the less employer obligations will change over time. The results shown in Table 2.4 support hypothesis 2b for both stages with statistically significant increases in R^2 (Time 2, $\beta=-.123$, $\Delta R^2=.015$; Time 3, $\beta=-.184$, $\Delta R^2=.034$).

Hypothesis 3b analyses the same relations for the employee side. The results also support hypothesis 3b for both stages (Time 2, $\beta=-.245$, $\Delta R^2=.060$; Time 3, $\beta=-.394$, $\Delta R^2=.155$). Hence, hypothesis 2b and 3b are fully supported.

The interactive effects of Fulfilment of Employer and Employee Obligations in predicting changes to newcomers' psychological contract over time (hypotheses 4 and 5) are also reported in Table 2.4. Hypothesis 4 was supported for Time 2 ($\beta=.301$, $\Delta R^2=.078$, $\Delta F=21.203$, $p<0.001$), and Time 3 ($\beta=.354$, $\Delta R^2=.107$, $\Delta F=26.365$, $p<0.001$). Hypothesis 5 was supported for Time 2 ($\beta=.245$, $\Delta R^2=.051$, $\Delta F=13.765$, $p<0.001$), and for Time 3 ($\beta=.199$, $\Delta R^2=.034$, $\Delta F=8.088$, $p<0.01$).

Figure 2.2 Employer Obligations Change Time 2

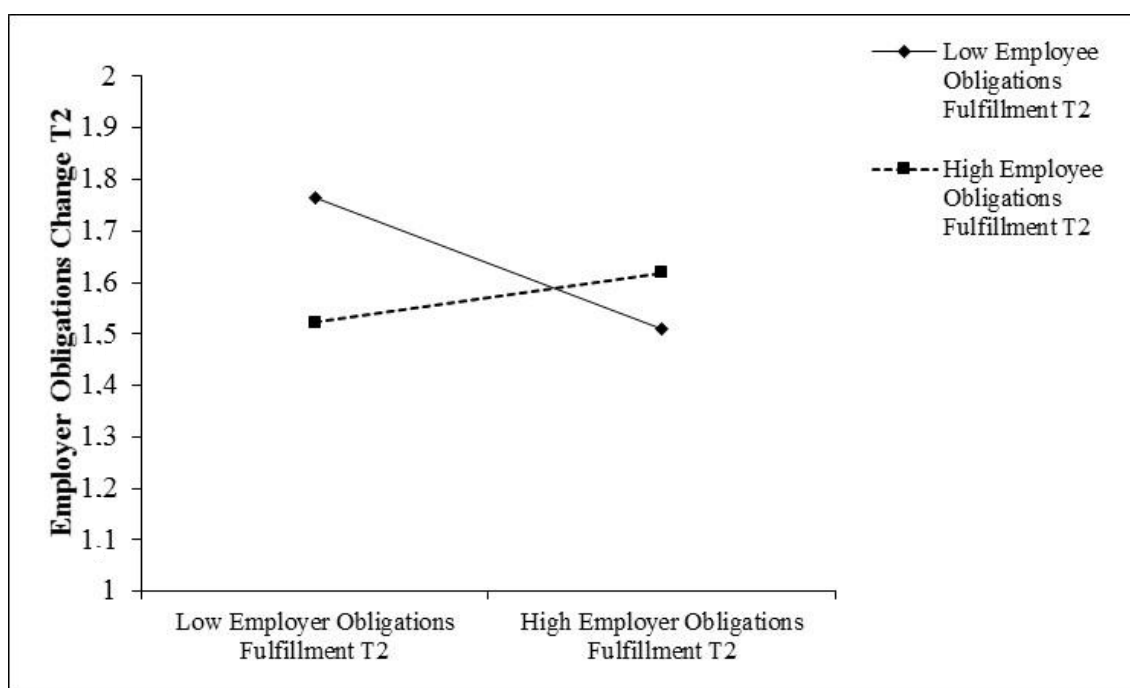


Figure 2.3 Employer Obligations Change Time 3

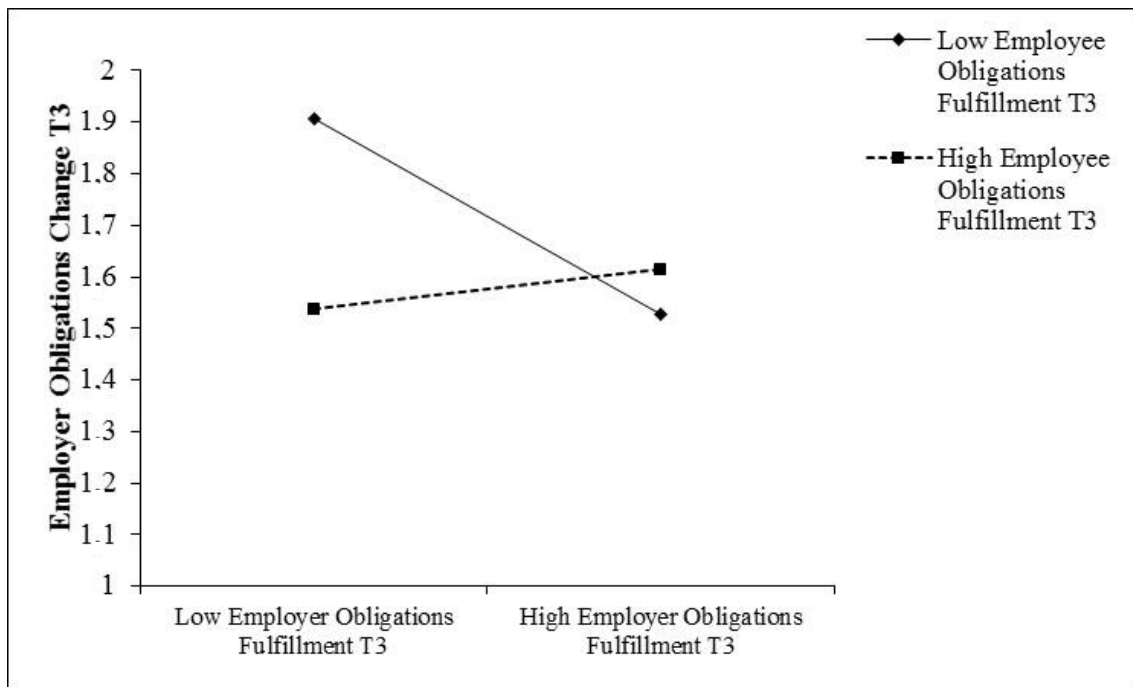


Figure 2.4 Employee Obligations Change Time 2

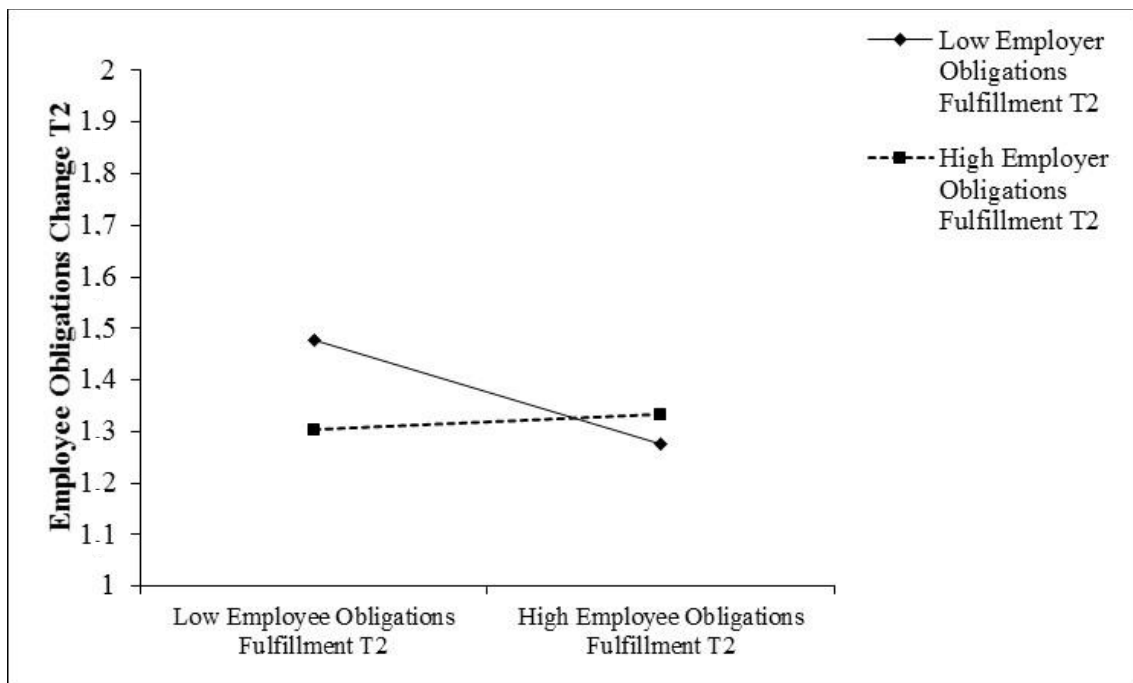
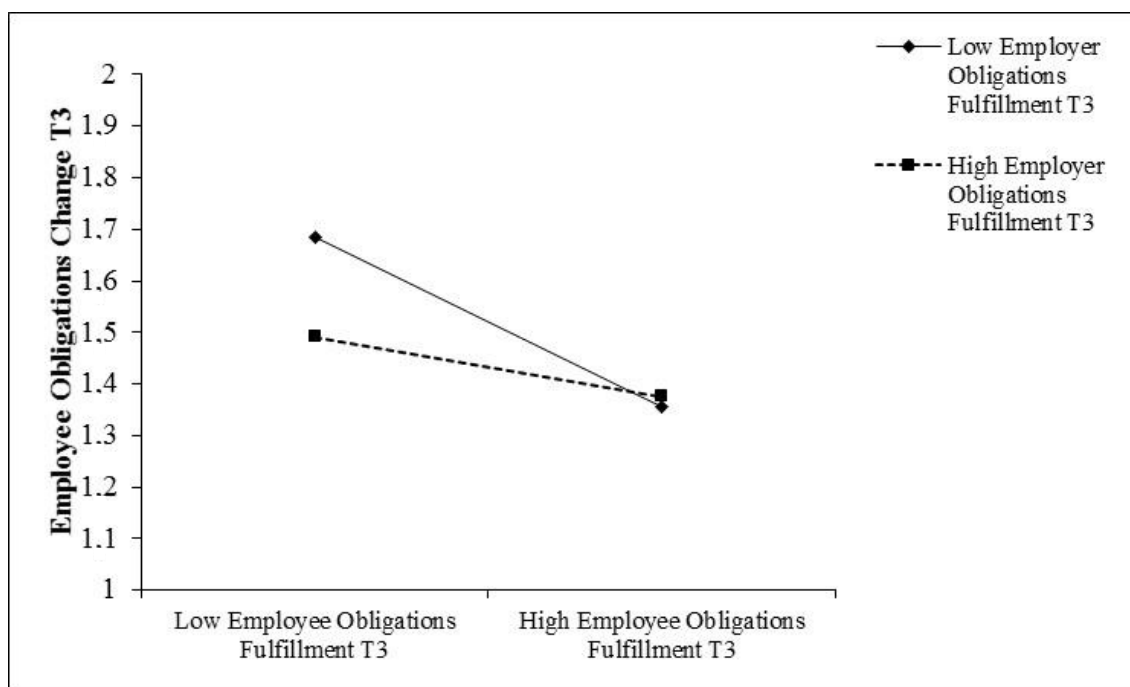


Figure 2.5 Employee Obligations Change Time 3



2.5 Discussion

This study investigated changes in psychological contracts during the expanded length of time of 3 years. This research advances theory by adding back the employee side of the psychological contract, and therefore is able to investigate how the perception of fulfilment of the employee obligations interact with the perception of fulfilment of the employer obligations to predict changes. Consistent with the approach of the psychological contract as a dynamic construct, the results supported the first hypothesis and highlighted the presence of small changes.

As regards the directionality of changes, the LGM results showed that on the average the perceived obligations decreased during the first three years of employment, because the slope coefficients were negatives. On the one hand, the non-significant slope variance obtained for employer obligations indicated that the rates of change over time between individuals were similar. On the other hand, the significant slope variance

obtained for employee obligations showed that some individuals decreased their perceived obligations levels faster than others did over the same intervals of time.

The *t*-tests results corroborated the finding about the directionality of changes. The *t*-tests comparing Times 1 and 2 showed that most of the obligations that differed significantly decreased. For the *t*-tests comparing Times 2 and 3, all the obligations decreased significantly. This study supports the findings of Tekleab et al. (2013), and the theoretical basis presented by them that point out the tendency of employees to exaggerate expectations in an unrealistic way and to perceive the most favourable side of the organization that is hiring them (Boswell, Shipp, Payne & Culbertson, 2009).

The results also supports the findings of Robinson et al. (1994), which pointed to a decrease in employees obligations over the first two years of employment. It is interesting to note that the obligations that had showed increasing differences among Times 1 and 2 share some meaning, they refer to unpredictable situations: “provides autonomy to do my job”, and “adjust easily to changes in my work situation”.

As discussed previously, the literature so far lack more longitudinal studies to investigate both types of obligations, those on the part of the employer and those on the part of the employee during the process of the development of psychological contract. This research reveals that the perception of obligations fulfilment is related to the way the obligations are perceived over time, corroborating the findings of De Vos et al. (2003) and Lester et al. (2007).

The regression coefficient relating the perception of employer fulfilment and the perceived employer obligations was not significant statistically in Time 3. Coherently, the relationship between the perception of employee fulfilment and the perceived employee obligations showed a substantially smaller degree of variance explained in Time 3 than in Time 2, and the significance statistic was smaller as well. Furthermore,

the results showed that the greater the perception of fulfilment of one obligation, the less will change the perception of this obligation.

These results suggest that for both employer and employee there is a fit process derived from the comparison between a person's beliefs of what had been promised and the knowledge of what had been done for real. Nevertheless, reciprocity also exerted an influence on how the perception of obligations changes.

Our results supported the norm of reciprocity, namely that employees react according to what they receive, and their actions and results depend on whether the employer fulfils its obligations (Gouldner, 1960). Our findings strengthen the argument of De Vos et al. (2003), and Coyle-Shapiro and Kessler (2002), since it seems that the perception of fulfilment of obligations by one side of the psychological contract is partially related with the way obligations are perceived by the other side over time.

The interactive effects showed that the highest level of changes in both obligations at all times was obtained when both fulfilment obligations were low. In the analyses of hypotheses 4 and 5, we found that lower levels of fulfilment of both sides in psychological contract, employer and employee, predicted the greatest changes.

The importance of the reciprocity for psychological contract fulfilment is pointed out by the lines in the plots that represent the high fulfilment of the obligations of the other part in the psychological contract. Although the perceived employer obligations are influenced by the fulfilment of these obligations, they are more strongly influenced by the belief of the employee if s/he is or is not complying with his/her own obligations to the employer. Likewise, although the employees perceive their own obligations depending on if they had fulfilled them, the perception of their own obligations depend more on if the employer had fulfilled its obligations to them.

2.6 Conclusion

This study supports the conceptualization of the psychological contract as process. It points out that the changes in the psychological contract depend on its fulfilment. The main contribution of this study is to understand this process and address the issue of change. Overall, this research suggests that the psychological contract goes through an adjustment period, undergoing changes as a function of adaptation and reciprocity in the experiences encountered after entry. Especially when there is low fulfilment by both parties, changes are most likely to occur. These findings provide an insight into the process of the formation of the psychological contract and suggest useful implications for organizational practice.

Não te aflijas com a pétala que voa:
também é ser, deixar de ser assim.

Cecília Meireles

Study 2

Chapter 3: Newcomers' Affective Organizational Commitment: A Latent Growth Modelling Approach to Understand the Changes over the First 3 Years - Study 2

3.1 Introduction

There has been extensive research on organizational commitment, and it is thus a mature research topic. This research has been motivated by the desirable consequences attributed to high levels of organizational commitment. The belief is that committed employees perform better and are less likely to quit (Cooper-Hakim & Viswesvaran, 2005; Riketta, 2008). Nevertheless, despite all of the knowledge accumulated thus far, certain important knowledge gaps persist (Becker, Klein, & Meyer, 2009).

A number of unanswered theoretical questions remain regarding how the levels of organizational commitment change over time and for what reasons; whether high levels of commitment have real consequences or this is inconsequential, and in which circumstances it has consequences or does not; why certain individuals are highly committed to the organization while others are less so; and finally, the ultimate question: can individuals' levels of organizational commitment be managed?

Organizational commitment develops over time (Meyer & Allen, 1991; Mowday et al., 1982). However, is it the case that a more stable development of commitment is particularly associated with personal characteristics? Alternatively, is it something more dynamic, affected by the context and changes therein? All extant research on the relationship between organizational commitment and other constructs has contributed to the construction of a background theory. Caution is necessary when drawing causal

inferences from most such studies due to their characteristics. Much of the research is correlational and cross-sectional in nature. Consequently, understandings of the process by which commitment develops, the changes over time, the causal direction, and the cause-and-effect relationship remain exploratory. The first goal of this study is to contribute to the understanding of the dynamic formation of organizational commitment as a process that develops over time.

Personal characteristics have traditionally been regarded as antecedents of organizational commitment (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Meyer et al., 2002). Thus, it is reasonable to assume that how organizational commitment changes differs across individuals. Yet, again, caution is called for when drawing inferences regarding inter-individual changes from most existing studies. Much of the literature employs traditional aggregate-level analysis, such as the analysis of variance and regression procedures, which interpret the inter-group changes based on a comparison of group means over time, may contribute little understanding of individual differences in this process.

Relatively few studies have examined the different ways in which individuals change their commitment levels over time; therefore, the second goal of the study is to examine these differences, if they exist. The data for this study were collected from a Brazilian public sector agency in a three-wave, longitudinal, within-subjects study (n= 194) of newcomers during their first three years in the organization. The findings of this study are intended to contribute to the understanding of how individual organizational commitment levels can be managed.

3.2 Organizational Commitment Theory

Organizational commitment is "the relative strength of an individual's identification with and involvement in a particular organization" (Mowday et al., 1982, p. 27). The affective organizational commitment (AOC) highlights the emotional nature that characterizes this involvement and links the person to the organization. There are reasons to expect change in AOC levels over time because studies provide strong evidence linking AOC to socialization practices, organizational changes, human resource practices, interpersonal relations, employee-organizational relations and these situational factors can lead to change in commitment levels (Morrow, 2011). Foremost, it is important to observe that tenure can play an important role in this stability issue due to the evolution of the employee-employer relationship. During early tenure, changes are expected arising from unmet expectations or negative work experiences (Meyer & Allen, 1997). Through the socialization stages, the employees experience an adjustment process with the more notable changes following the 'reality shock' (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979).

Longitudinal studies dedicated to understanding the process of change in AOC levels are very important, although they are still relatively rare. Considering that two time points are not ideal for studying changes (Singer & Willett, 2003), a review of previous studies was conducted searching for empirical findings involving three or more measures of OC/AOC. The search resulted in only 20 scholarly articles. Among these, studies that used analytical techniques capable of providing more appropriate ways to examine both individual and group differences in the process of change are however, exceptions (Bentein, Vandenberg, Vandenberghe & Stinglhamber, 2005; Lance, Vandenberg & Self, 2000; Ng et al., 2010; Solinger, Van Olffen, Roe & Hofmans, 2013).

Among these studies, three used latent growth modelling – LGM (Bentein et al., 2005; Lance et al., 2000; Ng et al., 2010), and one used latent class growth modelling – LCGM (Solinger et al., 2013), which is a form of mixture modelling for longitudinal data (Muthén, 2001). The fundamental difference between these approaches and other traditional longitudinal techniques is that change itself is captured as a latent variable and the variance between individuals is examined, giving access to both individual and group changes and enabling the study of the effects of independent variables on change (Schumacker & Lomax, 2010; Vandenberg & Stanley, 2009). These techniques create two latent variables: intercept or initial status (IS) and slope or linear change (LC).

The findings of the aforementioned studies that used LGM suggest that there were meaningful employee differences in commitment at the first time point (i.e. some individuals had greater mean levels than others at Time 1) because the reported IS variances in all three studies were statistically significant. The findings also suggest that organizational commitment decreased over time because the LC means in all studies were negative and significant. In two studies, the results showed that the commitment levels of some individuals decreased faster than for others over the same intervals of time (Bentein et al., 2005; Ng et al., 2010). On the other hand, the non-significant LC variance obtained by Lance et al. (2000) indicates that the rates of change over time among individuals were similar.

Solinger et al. (2013) identified trajectories of strengthening, weakening and stabilizing of organizational commitment in a study with newcomers over 25 weekly measures. They proposed taxonomy of three on boarding scenarios of commitment change during the newcomer adjustment process over time. In the scenario *Learning to Love*, the newcomer initially presents low commitment and over time the linkage with the organization is strengthened with a steadily increasing pattern of commitment. The

Honeymoon Hangover is the trajectory with the weakening of the initially strong bond. The notion of a honeymoon effect has been discussed in previous studies (Cropanzano, James, & Konovsky, 1993; Veninga & Spradley, 1981). The third scenario is the stable trajectory maintaining the bond over time. If the commitment was initially strong, it is sustained this way over time (High Match), if it was weak, it is held at the low levels over time (Low match) and finally if it was moderate, it is kept relatively unchanged over time (Moderate Match).

However, the general trend captured by most studies that used the aggregate-level analysis is of decreasing organizational commitment levels over time (Beck & Wilson, 2000; Cohen & Freund, 2005; Costa & Bastos, 2013; Earl & Bright, 2007; Farkas & Tetrick, 1989; Farrell & Petersen, 1984; Lee, Ashford, Walsh & Mowday, 1992; Levy & Williams, 1998; Maier & Brunstein, 2001; Meyer & Allen, 1987; Meyer & Allen, 1988; Meyer, Bobocel & Allen, 1991; Neiningger, Lehmann-Willenbrock, Kauffeld & Henschel, 2010; Porter, Crampon & Smith, 1976; Van Maanen, 1975; Vandenberg & Self, 1993). Therefore, the first point is to understand the change in AOC, we expect that:

H1: The newcomers' affective organizational commitment will decrease in different ways in individuals during the first 3 years in the organization.

By capturing change in AOC over time as a latent variable, it is possible to investigate the causes of this change. Although interpretations regarding the causes of changes are incipient in view of the scarce studies addressing this question (exceptions would be Lance et al., 2000 and Ng et al., 2010), so far, anticipatory met expectations,

job-choice difficulty and perceptions of psychological contract breaches were found to be related with change of AOC over time (Lance et al., 2000; Ng et al., 2010).

Predictors of static measures of commitment are potential antecedents to the measure of change as well, at least they can be supposed as predictors to Initial Status.

The antecedent variables for AOC were sorted into 2 groups by Meyer et al (2002): personal characteristics and work experiences. Among the personal characteristics that are considered to be AOC antecedents are: age, gender, education, marital status, tenure, perceived personal competence, ability, protestant work ethic and job level (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990). AOC is supposed to be greater among older individuals, females, married, with children, and would tend to be lower the higher the educational level (Cohen & Lowenberg, 1990; Mowday et al., 1982; Mottaz, 1986). The relationship between AOC and age, gender, education and marital status will be investigated in this study. The most consistent relationship is with age and tenure. In view of previous studies that found age to be correlated positively with AOC (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Meyer et al., 2002; Steers, 1977), we propose the following hypothesis. We will investigate the relationship between age and change in AOC levels as well.

H2: Age will be positively related to the Initial Status and to Change in AOC levels.

The individual values are another potential pre-entry determinant of AOC (Morrow, 2011). Value is a belief that a specific mode of conduct is personally preferable to another (Rokeach, 1973). Williamson et al. (2009) found that a cultural value (i.e. collectivist orientation) predicted AOC, depending on the perception of levels of pay and autonomy. Work values are more specific, influencing the orientation that

the individual has in relation to work and the way s/he interprets the importance of work in his/her life (Sverko, 1989). Derived from the theory of values, the centrality of work is a belief about the value that the individual attaches to work in his/her life. It is the degree of importance that work has, compared to other interests. (Bucholz, 1976; Dubin, 1956; Dubin, Champoux & Porter, 1975; England, 1991; MOW, 1987; Paullay, Alliger, & Stone-Romero, 1994). There is evidence that AOC tends to be higher among people with higher centrality in work (Bastos, 1994a; Dubin et al., 1975, Medeiros & Enders, 2002). The following hypothesis will be verified:

H3. Work centrality will be related to the Initial Status and to Change in AOC levels.

In theory, AOC is related to individuals' beliefs that their bond to the employer can lead to meaningful rewards (Mowday et al., 1982). The Meaning of Work International Research Team (MOW, 1987) also investigated work goals among individuals. Work goals represent the purposes that work has for the individual and responds to inquiries about the reason why the individual works (Bastos, 1994a). Although at lower levels, expected work goals are also listed as predictors of AOC (Bastos, 1994a). Based on this, we present the following hypothesis:

H4. Work values will be related to the Initial Status and to the Change in AOC levels.

The hypotheses aim to investigate the relationship between personal characteristics and AOC, although the effects of the work experience and the management practices to which the individual is subjected after joining the organization

were found to be of more importance to AOC than those involving personal characteristics in a general way (Meyer et al., 2002).

Different levels of commitment on entering an organization may reflect the different individual propensities that will come to strengthen or weaken this bond over time, depending on subsequent work experience (Mowday et al., 1982). Considering early work experiences, the confirmation of pre-entry expectations plays an important role (Meyer & Allen, 1988).

There is evidence that unmet pre-entry expectations predict lower AOC later after hire (Dean, Ferris & Konstans, 1988). AOC was also related to perceived organizational climate (Tyagi & Wotruba, 1993). The findings of these authors suggest that AOC may shape perceptions of climate and not the opposite.

Johnston, Griffeth, Burton and Carson (1993) investigated the effects of promotion on AOC. These authors found that AOC levels of promoted employees decreased less than that of other employees. We will investigate the effects of work experiences in this study by means of three practices of human resources management: career advancement, organizational climate and job rotation.

H5. The work experiences will be related to the Change in AOC levels.

3.3 Method

3.3.1 Sample and procedure

The population consists of 361 newcomers who were competitively selected for civil servant positions in a Brazilian government agency. This agency is an autonomous

federal institution, was created in 1964, and has about 4,000 employees. The selection process took place in 2010 and the level of difficulty was high, with 156 applicants per vacancy. Before doing the test the candidate could choose from a few general knowledge areas and indicate which Brazilian city they would prefer to work in. This public sector agency has representatives in ten Brazilian Cities. The scope of the selection process was national (i.e. people from various regions of Brazil did the test). The number of vacancies for each city was set, and the privilege of choice was given as the sort order in the selection. The first ranked candidates could choose the cities where they would prefer to work. Approximately 60% of those who were selected had to move to other regions of Brazil to take up the job.

The newcomers were selected for the position of analyst and joined the organization on about the same date. They were hired with an employment contract starting around August of 2010, subject to a probationary period of three years. Only after approval and entry into the organization, the newcomer is informed about what department of the organization s/he will work in and what his/her activities will be.

The allocation process is driven by the data analysis of resumes filled in by the candidates. The initial match is not always perfect. After being located in some city, and set in some activity, if the newcomer is not satisfied, they have to wait for a process of internal mobility and request relocation. Yet, there are no guarantees that all wishes are met. On the other hand, the organizational context is of job security because long-term employment is guaranteed by the agency, attrition is low and performance-pay link is limited. In the job market, the agency offers comparatively high earnings.

The newcomers were informed about this research during the orientation training. They received the invitation to answer the survey by e-mail during the orientation training before entry (t1= Time 1), then again approximately one year after

entry (t2), and again approximately three years after entry (t3). We worked with the information about career advancement, organizational climate and job rotation collected on approximately two years after entry.

This survey length was chosen because three years is the mandatory term for Brazilian public civil servants to become permanent. Although the intervals were not the same between the three AOC assessments, they were the same among individuals, which is a requisite for LGM approach (Kline, 2011). The aim was verify the first career stage, which is the pre-entry that would be influenced by personal characteristics, and expectations about work (Mowday et al., 1982).

The process of commitment to the organization begins even before the entry of the individual to it and develops slowly over successive years of employment (Mowday et al., 1982). For the study of change in AOC levels to be done in a comprehensive way, covering also the way the commitment starts to develop, this longitudinal within subjects study was initiated just before the entry of the individual to the organization. To assure representative participation in multiple data collections and avoid sample attrition, it was decided to do only three assessments. Moreover, in the third collection an incentive for respondents was offered, all of them participated in a raffle of three music players.

In the invitation e-mail, a text presented the study along with an external link to the questionnaire. The text reinforced the fact that it was a survey independent of the human resources department of the organization, conducted under an academic supervision with the researchers responsible identified. Participation in the study was voluntary and confidentiality was formally guaranteed. The emails were individually customized with a different link for each participant. The identification of the respondents made it possible to merge the results. After finishing the collection,

respondents were coded into numbers. The respondent did not have access to the answers of previous collections.

The first survey was filled out by 335 newcomers, 251 filled out the first and second and 202 newcomers participated in all three surveys (56 per cent response rating). Twenty-four employees left the organization (8 per cent) during the length of this study, three were temporarily transferred to another public agency and one had deceased.

Analyses concerning change were carried out using the data from those who responded to all surveys. The mean age of respondents was 36 years ($SD=7.5$), 26.7 per cent were female, 34.2 per cent were single and 68.1 per cent had no children. It is a high-educated population, considering that all respondents had at least one University degree and 66% had done some kind of postgraduate course.

We conducted some analyses to investigate the possibility of bias produced by attrition. Comparison of the participants which participated in the full study and those who stopped did not show any significant detectable differences on demographic characteristics or outlying responses in the resultant sample. The conclusion was that respondent attrition did not appear to create any sort of bias among the variables in this study.

3.3.2 Measures

The affective organizational commitment was calibrated with an instrument composed of 4 items from the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ), developed by Mowday, Steers and Porter (1979), translated and adapted for Brazil by Borges-Andrade, Afanasieff and Silva (1989); and by 3 items from the Affective Commitment

Scale (ACS), developed by Allen and Meyer (1990), revised by Meyer, Allen and Smith (1993), translated and adapted for Brazil by Medeiros and Enders (1998).

The bringing together of both instruments OCQ and ACS sought to create a single and stronger measure for affective organizational commitment (Menezes & Bastos, 2010). The items used to assess AOC are presented in Appendix A, B and C, as the exploratory principal component analysis and psychometric properties of the Measures. AOC was assessed at Times 1, 2 and 3 on a Likert Scale ranging from 1= strongly disagree to 5= strongly agree. To confirm validity of the constructs, confirmatory factor analyses on data with AMOS 21 were carried out. The model indicated a good fit for all Scales (Appendix D). The data screening for unengaged responses and outliers led to the deletion of eight cases.

Work centrality and work goals were evaluated only at Time 1. The participants were asked to assign a total of 100 points in any combination for seven work goals (e.g. income, status, to serve society) proposed by MOW (1987) and the original scores were used for this study. The work goals that were shown to be correlated to AOC were included in the LGM analyses.

The participants were also asked to assign 100 points in any combination of five different spheres of life: family, work, leisure, community and religion (MOW, 1987). Comparing point assignment across these five areas, the number of areas in which work had more points generated a score ranging from 0 to 4. They were also asked to indicate on a 3-point scale the level of general importance of work in their lives (MOW, 1987). The indicator of Work Centrality was calculated by the sum of the general score and the comparative score and resulted in one variable ranging from 1 to 7.

Career advancement, information about job rotation and the organizational climate were assessed only once, between times 2 and 3. We assessed this information

from appraisals undertaken by the organization. The career advancement means that the employee was designated as a boss or to an advisory position in the organization. It affects the position in the hierarchy of the employee. The employees chosen to occupy managerial or advisory positions receive compensation, recognition and status, similar to the effects of a promotion. Notice that technically, this is not a promotion because the promotion exists in the career plan of the organization and refers to another process. Promotion is an almost automatic mechanism, a matter of time in this organization. We coded career advancement dichotomously, based on whether or not the employee was given it by the second year of working in the organization, at Time 3. Of the newcomers who had participated in all three surveys, about 21 per cent had career advancement.

The second indicator of work experience is job rotation. In the context of the organization under study, it is a practice that enables the mobility of employees among departments of the organization itself. In the event that an employee wishes to be transferred to another department, s/he has to go through a process of internal selection.

The reasons for an employee to request job rotation are various. Among them, the most common reason is to move to another city, which would allow the employee to return to live where s/he used to live before starting to work in the organization. Job rotation information was only reported for employees who effectively were relocated. This aspect limits the assessment of the effects of job rotation on AOC levels. We also coded job rotation dichotomously, and about 10 per cent had relocated. The third indicator is the organizational climate of the department in which the newcomer was working at the time of measurement of these indicators, i.e. between Times 2 and 3.

3.3.3 Measurement invariance

The longitudinal measurement invariance of the AOC measure was verified (Vandenberg & Lance, 2000). We confirmed the configural invariance (equivalent factor structures) and did not confirm the metric invariance for the AOC Scale over time. The source of the measurement metric variance was located to one item, while all the other factor loadings could safely be argued to be invariant. After the removal of this item from the model, the chi square difference test was no longer significant ($\Delta\chi^2 = 16.679$, $\Delta df = 14$, $p = .274$) and the measure could be argued as invariant over time.

We also verified the measurement invariance comparing the antecedent groups. The high work centrality group (N=91) was compared to the low work centrality group (N=103) and the chi square test was not significant ($\Delta\chi^2 = 39.196$, $\Delta df = 35$, $p = .287$). Comparing the group with a high score in the work value “working is useful way for me to serve society” (N=135) with the low score group (N=59) no significant difference was found ($\Delta\chi^2 = 42.986$, $\Delta df = 35$, $p = .166$).

Comparing the group with high score in the work goal “provides me with an income that is needed” (N=79) with the low score group (N=115) a significance level of .05 was found ($\Delta\chi^2 = 55.798$, $\Delta df = 35$, $p = .014$). The source of the measurement variance was located to one item in Time 2, while all the other factor loadings, all other times could safely be argued to be invariant. The full metric invariance was not observed, however, considering that the longitudinal measurement invariance of AOC measure was verified and that invariance was located in just one item of those collected. This partial metric variance does not disrupt the interpretation of the results. With the variance of this item unconstrained in Time 2, the chi square test results were significant ($\Delta\chi^2 = 40.754$, $\Delta df = 33$, $p = .166$).

3.3.4 Latent growth curve modelling

We applied Latent growth curve modelling using structural equation modelling with Amos Version 21 to analyse the hypotheses (Duncan et al., 2006). This technique is helpful to capture the process of development and change in AOC because it might strengthen or weaken over time than had been possible in the past (Vandenberg & Stanley, 2009; Meyer et al., 2008).

To test the first hypothesis, we entered the three AOC measures into a basic LGM model. To test the other hypotheses, we entered the study variables into the model as shown in Figure 3.1. For each hypothesis, we compared two alternative models: (1) a freely estimated model and (2) a constrained model. For the first hypothesis, the LC mean was constrained to be equal to zero, meaning that there would be no change over time in AOC.

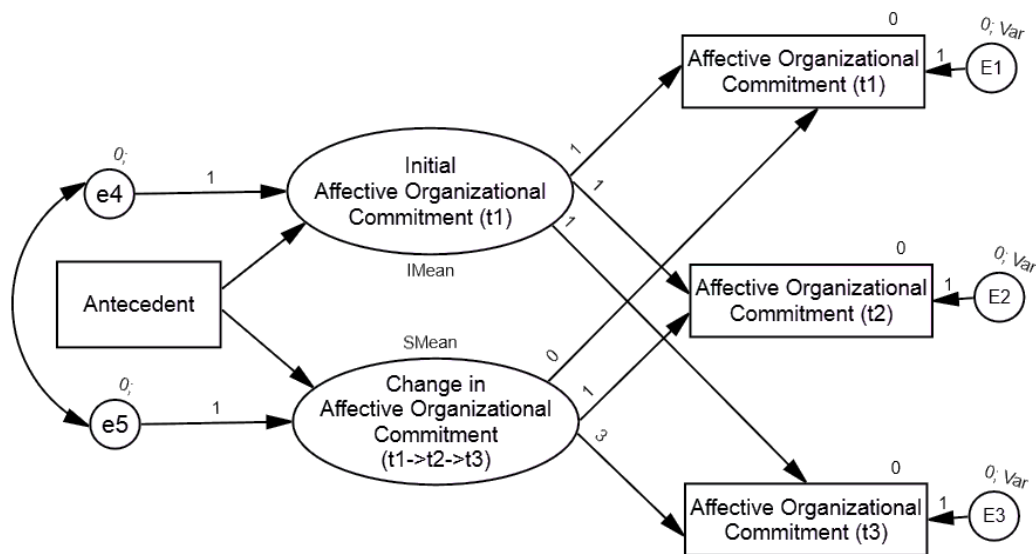
To test the other hypotheses, the regression weights linking the antecedent and the IS and LC latent variables were constrained to be equal to zero, meaning that the antecedent would have no effect in AOC Initial Status and Change over time. In the cases where only the effect on change was being tested (i.e. work experiences), only the regression weight between the antecedent variable and the LC was constrained to zero.

Satisfactory model fit was indicated when the chi square (χ^2) was not significant, the comparative fit index (CFI) was greater than .90, the standardized root mean square (SRMR) was less than .10, and the root mean-square error of approximation (RMSEA) was less than .08 (Schumacker & Lomax, 2010; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). We used the chi square difference test to compare the models. If it was

found that the antecedent had effects, to better understand them two groups for each antecedent were created.

We divided the sample in two groups by the median and conducted separate analyses for the antecedents groups. LGM parameter estimates (IS mean, LC mean, variances, and covariance) were analysed in order to understand AOC change process over time within this sample. Finally, to understand the change in AOC levels, the raw score differences of AOC, which is the difference between the later observed score and the earlier score, served as the basis for the creation of groups of individuals with similar trajectory changes. We entered the results of the groups into a basic LGM model separately and analysed the antecedents influence in each of these groups.

Figure 3.1 Representation of change model in AOC



3.4 Results

Table 3.1 presents the assignment of 100 points in five areas in life, the correlations of the results with AOC and a comparison with the results of a study carried out at the same organization fifteen years before.

Table 3.1 Work centrality – Pearson correlations with AOC and comparisons

The importance of different areas in life	AOC (t1) N=307	AOC (t2) N=240	AOC (t3) N=233	Newcomers (2010) N=307 Mean (SD)	Employees of the same organization (Silva, 1995)
family	-.027	-.025	.023	38.22 (11.39)	34
work	.160**	.143*	.080	25.59 (8.01)	28
leisure (e.g. hobbies, sports, recreation and contacts with friends)	-.195**	-.245**	-.198**	19.14 (8.86)	17
community (e.g. voluntary organizations, union and political organizations)	.019	-.109	-.016	9.91 (6.07)	11
religion (e.g. religious activities and beliefs)	.087	.222**	.106	7.14 (7.35)	10

Notes. AOC= Affective Organizational Commitment. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. Average values are reported. Standard deviations appear on parentheses. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

Table 3.2 presents the assignment of 100 points in seven statements of work goals for the respondents in this study at Time 1, the correlations of these results with AOC and the comparison with the results of the previous study. We should mention that in this first study the statement “working itself is basically interesting” was not applied due to suggestions received during the pre-test conducted (Silva, 1995, p.93). Only the first two statements proved to be correlated to AOC all the three Times and they also had the highest scores. Because of this, we tested only these meanings of work as antecedents in this research model.

Table 3.2 Work goals – Pearson correlations with AOC and comparisons

Working...	AOC (t1) N=307	AOC (t2) N=240	AOC (t3) N=233	Newcomers (2010) N=307	Employees of the same organization (Silva, 1995)
provides me with an income that is needed	-.296**	-.248**	-.170**	24.54 (11.52)	29
is a useful way for me to serve society	.255**	.133*	.155*	20.94 (10.30)	15
permits me to have interesting contacts with other people	-.048	.036	.033	11.48 (5.74)	13
keeps me occupied	-.177**	.047	-.022	7.75 (6.19)	12
itself is basically interesting	.136*	-.011	-.024	13.92 (7.30)	Item was not applied
itself is satisfying to me	.086	.150*	.007	11.72 (6.75)	22
gives me status and prestige	.087	.001	.077	9.65 (6.56)	9

Notes. AOC= Affective Organizational Commitment. Average values are reported. Standard deviations appear on parentheses. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

AOC measures used in this study showed reliabilities of .89 for all times. The Pearson correlation data indicated a positive relationship between AOC and age (Table 3.1), and a negative relationship between AOC and Education at Time 1 ($r = -.197$, $p < .01$). There was no significant relationship between AOC and gender. Being single was negatively related to AOC at Time 2 ($r = -.139$, $p < .05$) and Time 3 ($r = -.171$, $p < .01$). Being a father or a mother was related positively with AOC at Time 1 ($r = .135$, $p < .05$); Time 2 ($r = .257$, $p < .01$); and Time 3 ($r = .164$, $p < .05$). The Education, the Marital Status and father/motherhood were not included because this could have changed over the three years of this study and had not been updated. We verified the multivariate assumptions and the relationships were sufficiently linear to be tested using a covariance based structural equation modelling, and a multicollinearity issue was not found. Table 3.3 reports descriptive statistics, correlations, and Cronbach's alphas for scales.

Table 3.3 Means, standard deviations (SD), correlations, and Cronbach's alphas for the study variables

Variable	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Age	36.33	7.53							
2. Work Centrality	5.05	1.14	.198**						
3. Work result: income needed	24.54	11.52	-.024	-.175**					
4. Work result: to serve society	20.94	10.30	.141*	.226**	-.313**				
5. AOC (t1)	4.26	.63	.098+	.267**	-.296**	.255**	(.89)		
6. AOC (t2)	4.10	.80	.237**	.251**	-.248**	.133*	.511**	(.89)	
7. AOC (t3)	3.83	.79	.236**	.187**	-.170**	.155*	.512**	.719**	(.89)

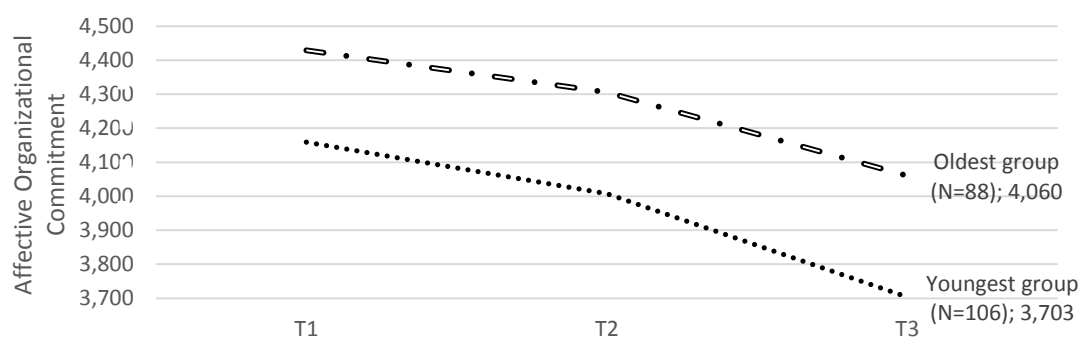
Notes. AOC= Affective Organizational Commitment. 't' before a number indicates 'Time' (e.g., t1 = Time1). N(t1)=307; N(t2)=240; N(t3)=233; N(t1_t2)=240; N(t1_t3)=233; N(t2_t3)=197. Age is expressed in years; Work Centrality is expressed on a 7-point scale; Meanings of work ranged from 0 to 100; and AOC is expressed on a 5-point scale. Cronbach's alphas for scales appear on the diagonal parentheses. +p<.10. *p<.05. **p<.01.

The freely estimated model of change demonstrated good fit (χ^2 (df=3, N=194)=6.517, p=.089; CFI=.980; SRMR=.029; RMSEA=.078). The Initial Status (IS) had a mean of 4.281 and a variance of .194, both p<.000, which means that there were significant differences between individuals AOC at the initial time point. The rate of change (LC) was -.139, p<.000, indicating that on the average AOC decreases .139 per year. The LC variance was a not significant .009 (p<.140), indicating that the variation in LC values among individuals was not meaningful. On average, AOC level changed (i.e., decreased) similarly between individuals, at the same rate over the same intervals of time. These findings supported the first hypothesis partially.

The covariance between IS and LC was .019, not significant at level .01 level, but at level .10 (p<.070). The fact that it was not significant indicates that there were no

significant differences in this relationship among individuals. The employees who had higher or lower IS means had similar LC means. The fit for the no growth model was poor, so the model fit and the chi square difference test ($\Delta\chi^2 = 64.803$, $\Delta df=1$; $p<.000$) provided support for the decreasing AOC hypothesis. Comparing means across time, AOC decreased significantly. The results of the paired-samples t-tests comparing the observed means of Times 1 and 2 (mean difference = $-.093$, $SD = 0.046$, $t = -2.025$, $p<0.05$) and comparing Times 2 and 3 (mean difference = $-.315$, $SD = 0.042$, $t = -7.418$, $p<0.000$) also supported the first hypothesis.

Testing the effects of age on the complete sample, the freely estimated model demonstrated good fit: χ^2 ($df=4$, $N=194$)= 6.661 , $p=.155$; $CFI=.986$; $SRMR=.025$; $RMSEA=.059$. The intercept had a mean of 3.801 ($p<.000$) and a significant variance of $.184$. The slope coefficient was $-.265$ ($p<.000$), with a non-significant variance of $.009$. The standardized regression weight between age and intercept was $.231$, $p<.05$ and between age and slope was $.275$, $p=.091$. The covariance between slope and intercept was a non-significant $.017$. The fit for the no effect model was poor, and the chi square difference test ($\Delta\chi^2 = 12.339$, $\Delta df=2$; $p<.002$) showed that age has an effect on AOC. To understand this effect better, we divided the sample in two groups by the median, which was 35 years old. The intercept had a mean of 4.159 , $p<.000$, and a rate of change of $-.152$, $p<.000$ for the group composed of the individuals up to 35-year-old ($N=106$), and the model fitted well ($\chi^2 /df=2.206$, $p=.085$; $CFI=.966$). The intercept had a mean of 4.429 , $p<.000$ and a slope of $-.123$, $p<.000$ for the oldest group ($N=88$), with a good fit model ($\chi^2 /df=1.079$, $p=.356$; $CFI=.996$).

Figure 3.2 Effects of age on AOC levels

Testing for the effects of work centrality, the freely estimated model demonstrated an excellent fit: χ^2 (df=4, N=194)=6.725, $p=.151$; CFI=.985; SRMR=.024; RMSEA=.059. The intercept had a mean of 3.737, $p<.000$ and a significant variance of .180. The slope coefficient was $-.122$, $p=.096$, the variance of .009 was not significant. The standardized regression weight between work centrality and intercept was $.273$, $p<.01$, and between work centrality and slope it was a not significant $-.039$. The covariance between slope and intercept was a non-significant .020.

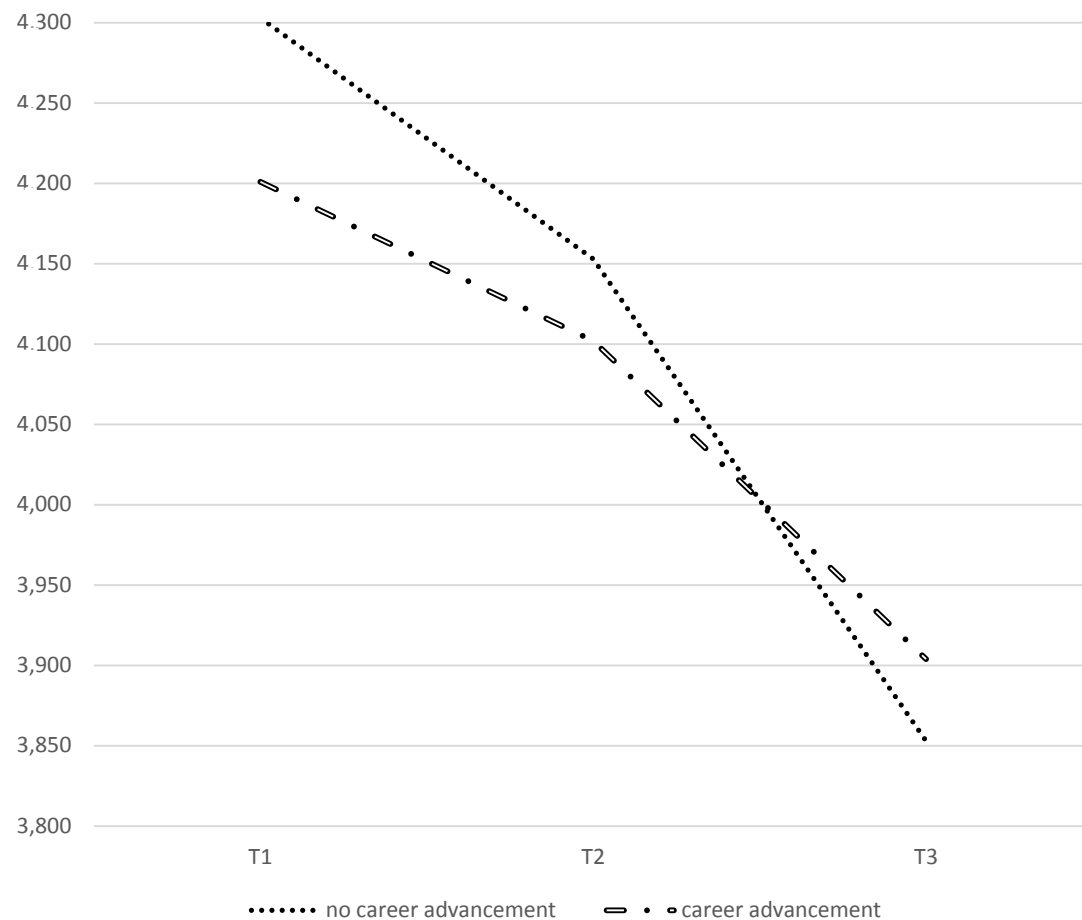
The fit for the no effect model was worse (χ^2 [df=6, N=194]=15.859, $p=.015$; CFI=.947; SRMR=.098; RMSEA=.092), and the chi square difference test ($\Delta\chi^2 = 9.134$, $\Delta df=2$; $p<.010$) provided support for hypothesis 3. The low-work centrality-group (N=103) had a mean intercept of 4.169, $p<.000$ and a rate of change of $-.132$, $p<.000$. The group with high work centrality (N=91) had a mean intercept of 4.408, $p<.000$ and a slope of $-.147$, $p<.000$.

In order to test the effects of work goals first the model with the goal “working provides me with an income that is needed” was tested. The comparison between the freely estimated model and the no effect model supported the hypothesis ($\Delta\chi^2 = 9.264$, $\Delta df=2$; $p<.010$). The standardized regression weight between the work goal and IS was

-.276, $p < .01$, and between the work goal and LC was a non-significant .053. Second, the model with the goal “working is a useful way for me to serve society” was tested and the chi square test provided support for the idea that the work goals have an effect on AOC ($\Delta\chi^2 = 8.376$, $\Delta df = 2$; $p < .015$). The standardized regression weight for the IS was .257, $p < .01$, and for the LC was a non-significant -.001.

The sample was divided in two groups by the median, with high and low scores. The group that higher values for the economic work goal had an IS mean of 4.214 and an LC mean of -.136, while for the group that had lower values this goal had an IS mean of 4.328 and an LC mean of -.141. The group with higher values for the work goal of serving society had an IS mean of 4.398 and an LC mean of -.126, while the other group had a IS mean of 4.231 and LC mean of -.145.

The test of the variable career advancement showed that it does not seem to have an effect because the freely estimated model and the constrained model both demonstrated good fit, and the chi square difference test confirmed it ($\Delta\chi^2 = 1.716$, $\Delta df = 2$; $p = .190$). The standardized regression weight between the variable and slope was not significant ($r = .214$, $p = .189$). However, the no career advancement-group ($N = 153$) had an IS mean of 4.303 and a rate of change of -.150 (IS variance of .215, $p < .000$, LC non-significant variance), and the group that had career advancement ($N = 41$) had an IS mean of 4.201 and change of -.099, both non-significant variances.

Figure 3.3 Effects of career advancement on AOC levels

The test of the variable job rotation showed that it also has no effect ($\Delta\chi^2 = .434$, $\Delta df = 2$; $p = .510$). The standardized regression weight between the job rotation and slope was not significant ($r = .108$, $p = .510$). The no job rotation-group ($N = 175$) had a rate of change of $-.143$, and the other group ($N = 19$) had a change of $-.107$. The test of the variable organizational climate showed that it does not have any effect ($\Delta\chi^2 = .519$, $\Delta df = 2$; $p < .471$). The standardized regression weight between the variable and LC was not significant ($r = .118$, $p = .471$). The group working in departments with a worse organizational climate ($N = 97$) had a rate of change of $-.140$, and the group working in departments with a better organizational climate ($N = 97$) had a change of $-.138$.

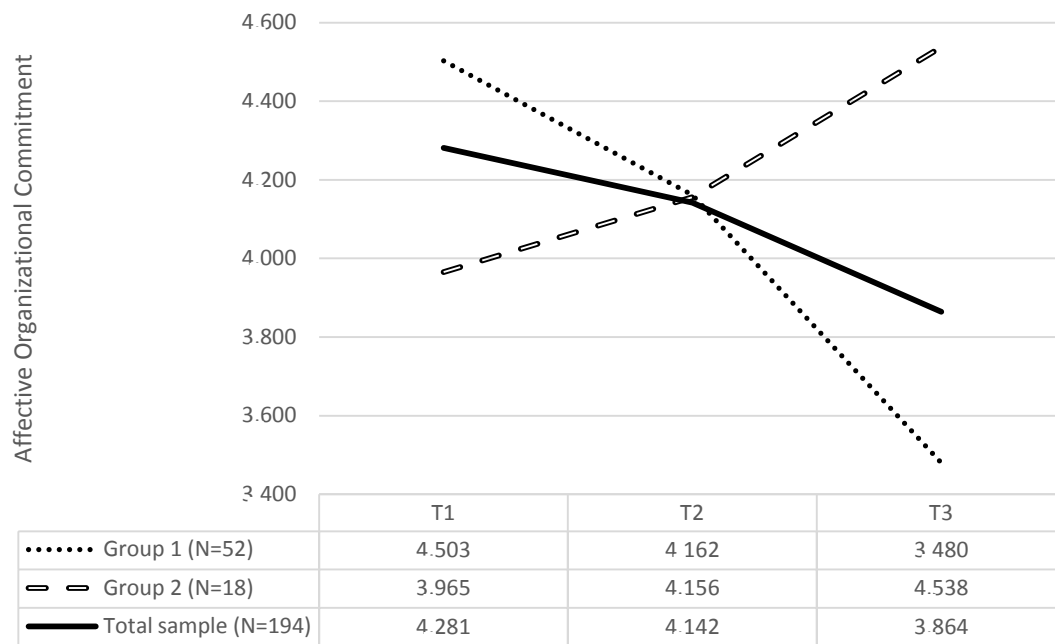
We entered the results of the groups of individuals with similar trajectory changes into a basic LGM model separately and the results are presented in Table 3.4. Since the aim was to analyse change, four individuals who had no changes for all the time intervals were not analysed in a group. Their observed means were 4.68 (SD=.47) all times, with no changes at all.

Table 3.4 Summary estimates obtained in trajectories groups using LGM

Trajectory	N	Initial Status (IS)		Linear Change (LC)		IS and LC Covariance
		mean	variance	mean	variance	
1. Decreasing AOC levels all times	52	4.503**	.201**	-.341**	.020**	<i>ns</i>
2. Increasing AOC levels all times	18	3.965*	.323*	.191*	<i>ns</i>	<i>ns</i>
3. Decreasing AOC levels between t1 and t2 or between t2 and t3	33	4.477**	.192**	-.189**	<i>ns</i>	.062**
4. Increasing AOC levels between t1 and t2, and decreasing AOC levels between t2 and t3	58	4.205**	<i>ns</i>	-.073**	<i>ns</i>	.059**
5. Decreasing AOC levels between t1 and t2, and increasing between t2 and t3	29	3.955**	<i>ns</i>	-.077**	-.089**	.130**
Total sample	194	4.281**	.194**	-.139	<i>ns</i>	<i>ns</i>

Notes. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *ns* = non-significant

The first group is made up of the individuals whose AOC levels decreased at all times. The second group is made up of the ones whose AOC levels increased at all times. These groups are of special interest because their trajectories are opposite and different from the majority, as shown in Figure 3.4.

Figure 3.4 AOC Trajectories

The characteristics of these groups are shown in Table 3.5.

Table 3.5 Comparison between Decreasing and Increasing AOC Trajectory Groups

	Total Sample N=194	Decreasing AOC Trajectory (Group 1) N=52	Increasing AOC Trajectory (Group 5) N=18
Age	36.73 (7.80)	34.90 (7.60)	36.78 (7.85)
Work Centrality	5.13 (1.14)	5.21 (1.19)	5.22 (1.00)
Work goal: Income needed	23.16 (10.15)	21.84 (10.09)	22.18 (6.74)
Work goal: To serve society	20.89 (9.59)	21.38 (11.23)	22.74 (11.43)
Career advancement	21.1%	19.2%	38.9%
Job rotation	9.8%	7.7%	11.11%
Organizational climate	53.15 (5.41)	53.02 (5.31)	55.49 (5.59)

Notes. Average values are reported. Standard deviations appear in parentheses. Career advancement and Job rotation are dummy variables. For these variables, the frequencies are presented.

3.5 Discussion

The results here suggest that older individuals with higher work centrality, lower valuation of the monetary work goal and greater appreciation of the work goal of serving society were those who had higher AOC levels at the time of joining the organization. We identified the effect of personal characteristics reflected in significant differences on the initial levels of AOC among individuals. Apparently, the personal characteristics had an effect on the level the newcomers are predisposed to become affectively committed (Meyer & Allen, 1997; Mowday et al., 1982).

The IS mean indicated that the initial level of AOC of these newcomers in this particular organization was comparatively higher than AOC levels obtained in other studies in the Brazilian public sector (Bastos, 1994b; Borges-Andrade, 1994; Flauzino & Borges-Andrade, 2008). The results show that for these employees, the work occupies the second most central position in the employees' lives only after family, and the two most important work goals were to receive the income and to serve society.

The findings of this study also suggest that the newcomers' AOC levels tend to decrease during the first years of work in the organization as part of a process of adaptation. These results confirm the trend found in all previous studies, of decreasing levels of AOC over time. The non-variant LC means suggests that the individuals changed their commitment levels in same direction and approximately at the same speed. These results are similar to those obtained by Lance et al. (2000).

Therefore, it was a challenge to investigate factors that could be related to different patterns of change, since the pattern was pretty much the same between individuals. In fact, no regression weight between variables and LC mean was

significant. However, analyses of comparisons give some clues. The results indicate that AOC levels tend to decrease less in older individuals, in those who value the work goal of serving society, in those who had career advancement and in those who had job rotation.

Person characteristics, except age, do not seem to have relevant influence on change in AOC levels, comparing the trajectories. The results suggest that personal characteristics can be good predictors for the initial level of AOC, but not so much for the change in AOC. The predictors of change in AOC levels seem to be more related to experiences in the organization post-entry, as the results of the comparison between groups show.

Although the results had indicated that the variance in the LC values was not significant among individuals, we identified a group of individuals with a trajectory with different directionality. These subjects had increased levels of AOC over all times. This group of less than 10 per cent of the total sample, consisting of 18 individuals, began their career with lower AOC levels in relation to the total group and then increased gradually and consistently over the years. This trajectory could be characterized by the scenario *Learning to Love*, with a steadily increasing pattern of commitment (Solinger et al., 2013).

Comparing the personal characteristics of the individuals in this group with the total sample did not identify any relevant information. The results suggest, however, that work experience was different for these people. The amount of individuals in this group who had career advancement was greater than in the whole group. They had proportionately more job rotation as well and worked in departments with a better organizational climate.

Another group that stood out from the general trend of change was made up of 52 individuals who began working with the highest levels of commitment and after three years had the lowest, compared with the whole sample and other groups with different trajectories. These individuals had joined the organization with the highest AOC levels, and then decreased in a consistent and more intense way than for other newcomers. The 52 individuals in this group trajectory were younger, the work centrality was greater, fewer employees had received career advancement, and fewer had job rotation in this group compared to the complete sample.

The issue here is that AOC proved to be a dynamic process that develops as a result of a trade established with the organization. On the one hand, the initial point of the trajectory is defined by the individual, their willingness and their individual characteristics, influenced by the environment, previous work experiences, and by what s/he already knows about the organization. On the other hand, the results suggest that the development of this trajectory is influenced by work experience post entry more. Individuals whose trajectory of AOC increased at all times began with a considerably lower level of AOC.

The individuals who had career advancement also had lower initial AOC levels than the others had. These individuals continued to have lower levels of commitment than those who had no career advancement until somewhere around the second year in the organization. The comparison between the groups of who had career advancement and those who did not suggested that the first group's AOC levels decreased less over time than the second group's. The newcomers who received an opportunity for advancement might perceive that the organization values them, and this together with the economic advantage and gain in status might have led to the development of AOC in a more positive way (Meyer & Allen, 1997). On the other hand, individuals who did

not have this opportunity may have felt wronged in some way and this may have affected their trajectory of commitment in a negative way.

However, caution is needed in these analyses. Why was the frequency of individuals who had career advancement in the increasing group higher than the total group? Did their levels of commitment increase because they had career advancement or did they have career advancement because of their AOC levels? When they were chosen for career advancement, their AOC levels were lower than the others, as shown in Figure 3.4. Despite this, they were chosen for career advancement over others, more committed candidates. Career advancement decisions communicate what the organization is looking for, what it values. These results suggest that the choices were made in favour of those with neither excessively high nor excessively low AOC levels.

3.6 Conclusion

This study contributes to the understanding of the dynamics of AOC formation as a process that develops over time and is affected by work experiences. The main contribution of this study is that it goes beyond the longitudinal studies of organizational commitment to understand this process and addresses the issue of change. These findings provide an insight into the process of formation and development of AOC and suggest useful implications for organizational practice.

The expectations of life depend upon diligence;
the mechanic that would perfect his work
must first sharpen his tools.

Confucius

Study 3

Chapter 4: Job Performance: the Longitudinal Effects of Psychological Contract Fulfilment and the Role of Affective Organizational Commitment within subjects - Study 3

4.1 Introduction

Job performance has an essential economic function for the organizations and plays an important psychological function for the employees as an element in the construction of their personal identity and their inclusion in social groups, including in the work itself. Job performance is a complex behavioural phenomenon. Its complexity may be a reason why its theoretical concept is of considerable heterogeneity as is its methodological operationalization, with a plethora of associated measures (Iaffaldano & Muchinsky, 1985; Grote, 2003; Manning & Barrette, 2005), although the concept is one of the most investigated in the area of organizational behavior. The epistemological difficulties of research into job performance research make the study of its antecedents scarce and inconclusive.

However, for organizations knowledge about job performance and the set of factors that influence it represent a competitive advantage, even if incomplete or imperfect. The research proposal of this study is to test empirically the association between fulfilment of the psychological contract, affective organizational commitment (AOC) and job performance. It is done from both parties in the psychological contract, taking into account how the employee perceives the fulfilment of employer obligations to him/her and his/her own obligations to the organization. The main aim of this study is therefore to investigate the mediator role of AOC in the relationship between the fulfilment of the psychological contract and job performance in a longitudinal study within subjects.

4.2 Job Performance Theory

The definition of job performance is usually divided into in-role and extra-role performance (Riketta, 2008). The first theories on job performance in the context of Taylorism and Fordism tended to emphasize task performance, which like in-role performance focuses on the fulfilling of tasks or on the results of the work. Task performance relates to the proficiency of the individual to contribute to the technical core of a position or occupation or required to perform the technical and instrumental requirements of each job behavior (Borman & Motowidlo, 1993; Campbell, 1990).

In-role performance is difficult to operationalize because the results may depend on other factors besides those under the control of the individual. Therefore, the models consider only the behaviors or actions that are under the control of the individual, especially in a process of evaluation, that has consequences and individuals can be punished or recognized by their results (Campbell, 1990; Murphy, 1990). Moreover, in-role performance ultimately devalues other behaviors that, although not directly linked to the implementation of the tasks, also contribute to the achievement of organizational objectives.

Extra-role performance considers the context and process of performance, similar to the contextual performance (Borman & Motowidlo, 1993; Riketta, 2008; Roe, 1999; Sonnentag & Frese, 2002; Sonnentag, Volmer & Spsychala, 2008). Extra-role performance sees the performance as a set of behaviors or actions of the individual in the work situation, relevant to organizational goals that can be measured. According to Borman and Motowidlo (1993), five categories make up contextual performance: conducting activities beyond the formal requirements of the position; demonstrating persistent enthusiasm and devotion when both are necessary for the performance of

prescribed tasks, providing assistance to others, obedience to rules and procedures prescribed even though they may be inconvenient, and the defending the interests of the organization. In this study, job performance refers to behavior that is relevant to objectives of the organization and can be measured in terms of the proficiency level (or contribution to the goals) which is represented by a particular action or set of actions (Campbell, 1999, p. 402).

4.2.1 Predictors of Job Performance

There are many factors that can be combined to determine job performance. The related constructs are located at different levels such as individual, group, organizational, and societal. Among an enormous list, we can mentioned some, such as organizational climate and culture (Fullarton, Fuller-Tyszkiewicz & Von Treuer, 2013), trust in the employer and human resource management practices (Alfes, Shantz & Truss, 2012; Kooij et al, 2013), the practice of feedback (Johnson, 2013), the leader–member and social network relationships (Jokisaari, 2013), self-esteem, generalized self-efficacy, locus of control, and emotional stability (Judge & Bono, 2001), age (Kooij, Guest, Clinton, Knight, Jansen & Dikkers, 2013; Ng & Feldman, 2013; Waldman & Avolio, 1986), apprenticeship support (Coelho Júnior & Borges-Andrade, 2011), and education (Fonseca & Bastos, 2003; Russel, 2001).

Individual differences are just one of the perspectives from which it is possible to analyse the impact on the job performance of the person, that is, factors such as personality, experience, cognitive skills, motivation and self-efficacy predict job performance (Bandura, 1997; Campbell, 1990; Johnson, 2003; Kanfer & Kantrowitz, 2002; Organ & Ryan, 1995; Schmidt & Hunter, 2004; Sturman, 2003). Research

indicates that clarity of roles, which prevents or reduces ambiguity or conflict, is an important predictor of job performance (Sonnentag & Frese, 2002).

Lack of organizational support can also affect job performance, when the individual is committed and wants to do a good job but does not have adequate conditions for such. Perceived organizational support indicates the degree to which employees believe that their organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being (Eisenberger, Huntington, Huntington & Sowa, 1986). For example, when employees do not have access the appropriate equipment, or rely on information systems that do not always function. It also covers temporary situations, where the replacement of a working instrument depends on a bureaucratic process of buying and just takes longer than expected. Lack of employee training also falls into this category. This is when an individual who has a pro-performance attitude, just does not know how to do something. It might be because s/he does not have the necessary skills or has not have received adequate training or because of changes in their work processes, which s/he has not adapted to.

The list seems endless, as there are several factors that can determine job performance and numerous variables that can somehow affect it. Two important predictors of job performance are the psychological contract and organizational commitment (Bal et al., 2010; Benkhoff, 1997; Conway & Coyle-Shapiro, 2011).

4.2.2 Psychological Contract, AOC and Job Performance

The psychological contract refers to beliefs concerning the terms and conditions of a reciprocal exchange agreement between an individual and the organization (Rousseau, 1995). A central aspect in the definition of the psychological contract is the idea of two-

sided exchange and reciprocity (Conway & Briner, 2005). The employee perceives his or her own obligations toward the employer as well as the obligations of the employer towards themselves. In investigating the consequences of the psychological contract, the focus should be on the state of psychological contract, which is determined depending on the fulfilment of its contents (Guest & Conway, 2002).

The perception of non-fulfilment of the perceived promises or obligations is understood as a breach of the psychological contract (Robinson & Morrison, 2000). Violation is associated with breaches, when these breaches are accompanied by an emotional reaction. It is an emotional experience of disappointment, frustration, anger and resentment that might emanate from the way the employee interprets and feels about the psychological contract breaches and their circumstances (Morrison & Robinson, 1997, p. 242).

One of the consequences of fulfilment of the psychological contract is organizational commitment, which refers to "the relative strength of an individual's identification with and involvement in a particular organization" (Mowday et al., 1982, p. 27). The affective organizational commitment (AOC) highlights the emotional nature of the attachment between the individual and the organization. A review of previous studies was conducted for empirical findings relating psychological contract and organizational commitment.

The studies related a negative relationship between breaches in psychological contract and organizational commitment in a general way (Bal, Lande, Janse & Velde, 2008; Bunderson, 2001; Cassar & Briner, 2011; Coyle-Shapiro & Kessler, 2000; Lapointe, Vandenberghe & Boudrias, 2013; Ng et al., 2010; Kickul, 2001; Kickul, Lester & Belgio, 2004; Johnson & O'Leary-Kelly, 2003; Lester et al., 2002). Other amount of studies found also a negative relationship between violation in psychological

contract and organizational commitment (Granrose & Baccili, 2006; Knights & Kennedy, 2005; Lemire & Rouillard, 2005; Raja, Johns & Ntalianis, 2004; Robinson, 1995; Shahnawaz & Goswami, 2011).

Other studies investigated the types of psychological contract, and found that transactional contracts were negatively correlated with organizational commitment (McInnis, Meyer & Feldman, 2009; Philipp & Lopez, 2013; Raja et al., 2004).

Finally, some researches related a positive relationship between fulfilment of the psychological contract and organizational commitment (McInnis et al., 2009; Parzefall, 2008; Sturges, Conway, Guest & Liefoghe, 2005).

Studies investigating the relationship between psychological contract and job performance are few. Conway and Coyle-Shapiro (2011) found that the strength of the relationship between the fulfilment of the psychological contract and performance increased over time. The results of Turnley, Bolino, Lester and Bloodgood (2003) suggest that psychological contract fulfilment is positively related to in-role performance and organizational citizenship behavior.

Among the studies that have investigated how the breach of psychological contract affects job performance, Tekleab, Orvis and Taylor's (2013) results showed that breach was not related to performance. In contrast, Bal, Chiaburu and Jansen's (2010) results showed that psychological contract breaches have a considerable impact on work performance, and Lester et. al. (2002) found that the greater the breach perceived by the employees, the lower their job performance.

The significant and direct effects of breaches on in-role performance were also supported by Johnson and O'Leary-Kelly (2003), and Restubog, Bordia, Krebs and

Tang's (2005) studies. In line with previous empirical studies, the first hypothesis is presented.

H1: The fulfilment of the psychological contract (Employer and Employee Obligations) will be positively related to (a) AOC and (b) job performance.

If on the one hand there is some consensus about the relationship between psychological contract and the other two constructs, on the other hand findings about the relationship between AOC and job performance are not conclusive. The complexity of these two phenomena is an explanation for this gap in research in organizational behavior. The job performance can be investigated as in-role or extra-role performance, and assessed by self-ratings, supervisor ratings or objective indicators. These are just some few of the possibilities.

There is not a broad consensus about the dimensionality of the job performance construct, as aforementioned. It is indeed a very complex construct, and subject to important biases. As suggested by Benkhoff (1997), the results relating the two constructs may vary depending on how commitment and job performance were measured. In a meta-analysis, Riketta (2002) found that the correlation was significantly stronger for extra-role performance than for in-role performance, and for performance assessed by self-ratings than for supervisor ratings or objective indicators.

A review of the literature on commitment shows the existence of different perspectives: one-dimensional views (Becker, 1960; Mowday et al., 1982) and multidimensional views (Meyer & Allen, 1991); attitudinal views (Mowday et al., 1982) and behavioral (Staw, 1974); focusing on different instances, such as the

organization, the job itself, the team, the career, and the labour union (Bastos, 1994a). It seems important to consider which one is the focus of the commitment in the case.

The findings of Rowe and Bastos (2010) found that career commitment was positively related to overall performance. Bishop and Scott (1997) found that team commitment led to increased productivity, but organizational commitment did not. No significant relationship between organizational commitment and job performance were found in other studies as well (Keller, 1997; Tayo & Adedapo, 2012).

The findings of Mathieu and Zajac (1990) suggest that commitment has relatively little effect on performance. Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch and Topolnysky's (2002) meta-analysis found AOC positively correlated to job performance. In some studies commitment is studied in conjunction with other constructs (e.g. job satisfaction) to investigate the effects of overall job attitude on performance (Harrison, Newman & Roth, 2006; Riketta, 2008).

The findings of Wright and Bonett (2002) suggest that the correlation between the two constructs decays as a function of tenure. Other studies have shown positive effects, weak but statistically significant (Riketta, 2008). Taking into account prior studies, we propose the investigation of the following hypothesis:

H2: AOC will be weak and positively related to job performance.

A review of previous studies relating the three constructs shows that, though separately they have a long tradition of research, they are relatively isolated with little communication between them. One reason for this gap may be due to the complexity of the phenomena involved. Studies that investigated the three constructs were mostly

cross-sectional in nature, which limits the ability to make causal inferences. The results of the only one longitudinal study that was found suggest that perceived breaches of psychological contracts are most strongly associated with lower organizational commitment and job performance (Bunderson, 2001). Lester et al. (2002) found that the greater the psychological contract breach, the lower AOC and job performance as well. The results of Chen, Tsui and Zhong (2008) reinforce the findings of other studies on the relationship between the three constructs.

Similar to the present study, Restubog, Bordia and Tang (2006) investigated the mediating role of AOC in the relationship between psychological contract breach and performance. They found that AOC mediates the relationship between psychological contract breach and extra-role performance, but not between breach and in-role performance. Despite this, it is plausible that AOC may mediate the relationship between fulfilment of the psychological contract and job performance. That is, when employees feel that their psychological contracts have been fulfilled by the employer, they will become more committed to the organization, and they will perform better. Accordingly, we present our third hypothesis.

H3: The affective organizational commitment will partially mediate the relationship between fulfilment of the psychological contract and job performance.

4.2.3 Organizational Context

This research was conducted in an autonomous federal government agency created in 1964, which has about 4,000 employees. The agency has representatives in ten Brazilian cities. The organizational context is of job security as the long-term employment is

guaranteed by the agency, the attrition is low and the performance-pay link is limited. In the job market, the agency offers comparatively high salaries. Regulation of the legal system of civil servants and federal public foundations is stipulated in Brazil by Federal Law n°. 8.112/1990 (Brazil, 1990).

In Brazilian public administration, the first plan for job classification and the first guidelines for performance evaluation date from 1936 (Brazil, 1936). Historically in this context, the link between career development and performance evaluation, without the necessary institutionalization of an appropriate review process, has neutralized the system, removing the same potential for it to become an effective merit system in the civil service (Barbosa, 1996).

Later, performance evaluation in the Brazilian public sector was defined by Law 11.784/2008, as “the systematic and continuous monitoring of individual performance server and institutional agencies, having as reference the global and intermediate goals the organizations and agencies” (Brazil, 2008, art. 141). The Law stipulated that the evaluation of institutional performance would be composed of criteria and factors that reflected the competences of the employees assessed by the performance of individual tasks and activities assigned to them and the contribution of the team working to fulfil the intermediate and overall targets of the agency and the results achieved by the organization as a whole (Brazil, 2008).

The last decades of the twentieth century saw the development of performance appraisal techniques across multiple ratters, the trend toward integration of individual and team performances, and the rise of the concept of performance evaluation tied to skills development. Even with these advances, performance measurement in the context of the Brazilian public administration remains a challenge that requires the study of the concept.

4.3 Method

4.3.1 Sample and procedure

The population consists of 361 newcomers who passed in the competitive selection process that took place in 2010 to select civil servants for the government agency in this study. The newcomers received the invitation to answer the survey by e-mail approximately one year (Time 1) and three years after entry (Time 3). Job performance was measured about two months after each measure (Times 2 and 4).

In the invitation e-mail, a text presented the study along with an external link to the questionnaire. The text reinforced the fact that it was a survey independent of the human resources department of the organization, conducted under academic supervision with the responsible researchers identified. Participation in the study was voluntary and confidentiality was formally guaranteed. The e-mails were individually customized with a different link for each participant. The identification of the respondents made it possible to merge the results. After finishing the data collection, respondents were coded into numbers. The respondent did not have access to the answers of previous collections.

The first survey was filled out by 251 newcomers. Two hundred two individuals participated in the two surveys (56 per cent response rating). Twenty-four employees left the organization (8 per cent) in the course of the study, three had been temporarily transferred to another public agency and one had deceased. Analyses concerning change were conducted using the data from those who responded to all surveys.

The mean age of respondents was 36 years ($SD=7.5$), 26.7 per cent were female, all respondents had at least one university degree, and 66% had done some kind of postgraduate course. To investigate the possibility of bias produced by attrition, some

analyses were conducted. Comparison of the participants in the full study and those who stopped did not produce any significant detectable differences in the demographic characteristics or outlying responses in the resultant sample. The conclusion was that respondent attrition did not appear to create any sort of bias among the variables for this study.

4.3.2 Measures

We calibrated the psychological contract with an instrument composed of 20 items developed for this study. The items were developed based on the measures of Sels et al. (2004), Kickul et al. (2002), Herriot et al. (1997) and the management practices of the participating organization (Guzzo & Noonan, 1994). The measure of Sels et al. (2004) was applied in Brazil by Rios (2007), and the results were helpful in the process of construction and validation of an adapted measure for the Brazilian context. Illustrative items of employer and employee obligations are to “provide autonomy to do my job”, and “bring own ideas and creativity into this firm”. We assessed the fulfilment of the psychological contract at Times 1 and 3, by asking respondents to indicate on a 5-point scale, ranging from ‘not at all’ to ‘overcame’.

Affective organizational commitment was calibrated with an instrument composed of 4 items from Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ), developed by Mowday et al. (1979), translated and adapted for Brazil by Borges-Andrade et al. (1989); and by 3 items from Affective Commitment Scale (ACS), developed by Allen and Meyer (1990), revised by Meyer et al. (1993), translated and adapted to Brazil by Medeiros and Enders (1998). The bringing together of both instruments OCQ and ACS sought to create a single and stronger measure for affective organizational commitment (Menezes & Bastos, 2010). Illustrative items are “I talk up

this organization to my friends as a great organization to work for”, and “This organization has a great deal of personal meaning for me”. We assessed AOC at Times 1, and 3, on a Likert Scale ranging from 1= strongly disagree to 5= strongly agree.

We assessed job performance by supervisor ratings in performance appraisals undertaken by the organization. We obtained indicators on five criteria: assiduity, discipline, sense of initiative, productivity and responsibility. Illustrative criteria descriptions are productivity as the “volume and quality of work produced in a given time interval, taking into account the nature and complexity and the conditions for its realization”, and assiduity as the “active, systematic and regular presence in the workplace, within the established time”.

Job performance was assessed at Times 2 and 4, on a Likert Scale ranging from 1= far below the minimum standards expected, to 4 = excellent in relation to expected standards. All measures showed acceptable reliabilities over the times, the Cronbach’s alphas for scales ranged from 0.77 to 0.96 (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). Exploratory principal component analysis and psychometric properties of the Measures are shown in Appendix C. To confirm validity of the constructs, confirmatory factor analyses on data with AMOS 21 were carried out. The model indicated a good fit for all Scales (Appendix D).

4.3.3 Structural equation modelling

We applied structural equation modelling with Amos Version 21. In all analyses, we used the estimation method of maximum likelihood (ML). The data failed to meet the assumption of multivariate normality that the ML estimation is based on perfectly. Deviations from normality were moderate and only some of the variables of self-

reported, but as an aid, we performed bootstrapping with percentile confidence and bias-corrected confidence of 95. To analyse the hypotheses, first we analysed Times 1 and 2, and Times 3 and 4 separately. Then all the measurements were integrated, and three models were compared.

The first model verifies the hypothesis that AOC mediates the relationship between fulfilment of the psychological contract and job performance. All the variables are interconnected. The second model is the indirect effects, i.e. there is no direct link between psychological contract and job performance. In the third model, the fulfilment of the psychological contract and AOC affect job performance independently. In this model, there is no link between fulfilment of the psychological contract and AOC.

We compared the goodness-of-fit indices for these three alternative models. Satisfactory model fit was indicated when the proportion of chi square to degrees of freedom (χ^2/df) was less than 3, root mean-square error of approximation (RMSEA) was less than .08, standardized root mean-square (SRMR) was less than .10, goodness-of-fit index (GFI), adjusted GFI (AGFI) normed fit index (NFI), and comparative fit index (CFI) were greater than .90 (Schumacker & Lomax, 2010; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007).

4.4 Results

Table 4.1 reports descriptive statistics, correlations, and Cronbach's alphas for all scales.

Table 4.1 Means, standard deviations (SD), correlations, and Cronbach's alphas for the study variables

Variable	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. ERF (t1)	2.77	0.66	(.86)							
2. EEF (t1)	3.49	0.43	.239**	(.77)						
3. AOC (t1)	4.11	0.80	.537**	.298**	(.89)					
4. JP (t2)	3.50	0.42	.110	.167*	.002	(.96)				
5. ERF (t3)	2.85	0.68	.624**	.178*	.363**	.126+	(.88)			
6. EEF (t3)	3.54	0.48	.181*	.584**	.275**	.195**	.294**	(.80)		
7. AOC (t3)	3.81	0.82	.474**	.286**	.745**	-.072	.551**	.333**	(.89)	
8. JP (t4)	3.54	0.40	.094	.114	.011	.301**	.177*	.140*	.034	(.95)

Notes. N=202. ERF= Fulfilment of Employer Obligations; EEF= Fulfilment of Employee Obligations. AOC= Affective Organizational Commitment. JP= Job Performance. 't' before a number indicates 'Time' (e.g., t1 = Time1). ERF, EEF and AOC are expressed on a 5-point scale. JP is expressed on a 4-point scale. Cronbach's alphas for scales appear on the diagonal parentheses. +p<.10. *p<.05. **p<.01.

The correlations between fulfilment of the psychological contract (employer and employee obligations) and AOC were significant and ranged from .298 to .551, as shown in Table 4.1. The correlations with fulfilment of employee obligations were smaller than the correlation with fulfilment of employer obligations. The regression weights between fulfilment of the psychological contract (employer and employee obligations) and AOC were all significant at level .001. The relationship between fulfilment of employer obligations and AOC is strong, with regression weights greater than .50, i.e. they were .514 at Time 1 and .547 at Time 3. The regression weights between Fulfilment of Employee Obligations and AOC were .230 at Time 1 and .196 at Time 3. Fulfilment of the psychological contract explained 39.7% of the variance in AOC at Time 1 and 42.4% at Time 2. The predictive power of the variables of fulfilment of psychological contract in relation to AOC is strong and significant. Hence, the hypothesis 1a is fully supported.

The correlations between psychological contract fulfilment and job performance were all significant at level .05, except for fulfilment of employer obligations (Time 1) and job performance (Time 2). The correlations ranged from .110 to .177. The regression weight between Fulfilment of Employer Obligations and job performance was not significant in analysis of the first measures (Times 1 and 2). As for fulfilment of employer obligations at Time 3 to job performance at Time 4, the regression weight was significant ($r=.141$, $p<.05$). The regression weight between the fulfilment of employee obligations at Time 1 to job performance at Time 2 was significant ($r=.194$, $p<.01$). This relationship between the variables at Time 3 and Time 4 was not significant. These results support the hypothesis 1b only partially. In the analysis of a model including only fulfilment of the psychological contract and job performance, the variance explained was 5.1% at Time 2 and it was 5.2% at Time 4.

The correlations between AOC and job performance were all not significant and near zero. In the analysis of a model including only AOC and job performance, without psychological contract variables, the regression weights were all non-significant and close to zero. On its own AOC has no explanatory power in relation to performance. These results offer no support to hypothesis 2. In summary, the independent variables (i.e. psychological contract fulfilment and AOC) have correlations between themselves ranging from .239 to .551, significant at .01 level and AOC has no explanatory power on the dependent variable (i.e. job performance). These results do not contribute the achievement of an optimum explanation model that can be promoted “by independent variables that correlate strongly with the dependent variable and weakly with each other” (Maassen & Bakker, 2001, p.242).

Table 4.2 reports the direct and indirect standardized regression weights between the variables of the psychological contract fulfilment (employer and employee

obligations) with and without the variable AOC in the model in order to evaluate the mediator effect of this variable. The direct beta without mediator shows how is the relationship between the variables of psychological contract fulfilment and job performance without the mediation of AOC. As previously reported in the analysis of hypothesis 1b, the relationship between psychological contract fulfilment and job performance was not significant in all the analysis. Neither has the fulfilment of the psychological contract a predictive significant power in relation to job performance in all analysis, nor AOC. However, with these constructs together in an explanatory model, the explanatory power of the variables of the psychological contract fulfilment increases and becomes significant at all times, ranging from .163 to .238.

Table 4.2 Standardized Direct and Indirect Effects on Job Performance

Relationship. Mediator: AOC	Direct Beta without Mediator		Direct Beta with Mediator		Indirect Beta	
	(t2)←(t1)	(t4)←(t3)	(t2)←(t1)	(t4)←(t3)	(t2)←(t1)	(t4)←(t3)
JP ← ERF	.068 <i>ns</i>	.141*	.167*	.232**	-.099*	-.092*
JP ← EEF	.194**	.130+	.238**	.163*	-.044**	-.033*

Notes. N=202. ERF= Employer Obligations Fulfilment; EEF= Employee Obligations Fulfilment. AOC= Affective Organizational Commitment. JP= Job Performance. Two Tailed Significance. +p<.10. *p<.05. **p<.01.

Considering that both the direct beta with mediator and indirect effects from psychological contract fulfilment to job performance were significant, we can say that there is a mediation relationship between the variables. This result supports the third hypothesis. Considering that the indirect effect was significant and that the direct effects did not fall in significance when we added the mediator, the hypothesis of full mediation can be discarded. The exact opposite happened, i.e. instead of a decrease in significance, they improved. Notice that the signs of the direct and indirect coefficients

are opposites. This pattern of coefficients is known as inconsistent mediation (Davis, 1985).

In cases like this, in that the direct and mediated effects of an independent variable on a dependent variable have opposite signs, a suppression effect is present (Tzelgov & Henik, 1991). The indirect effect with a different sign from its validity indicates that the variables of psychological contract fulfilment were suppressed by AOC within the mediation model. A suppression effect can be observed when a variable is uncorrelated with the dependent variable and strongly correlated with other predictors (Horst, 1941). Suppression situations are more often observed in conditions of high correlation between predictors. (Tzelgov & Henik, 1991). AOC thus becomes a classic suppress variable that improves prediction by virtue of being highly correlated with fulfilment of employer and employee obligations.

The results show that when analysed separately AOC has no predictive power with respect to job performance. Together in a mediation model, the variables of psychological contract fulfilment and AOC explain 7.4% of the variance in job performance at Time 2 and 6.8% at Time 4. That is, the addition of AOC as a mediating variable to the model increases the explanatory power regarding the variance in job performance in 2.3% at Time 2 and 1.6% at Time 4. It is a small increase in explanatory power; however, the relationships established were significant in all the analysis.

A suppressor variable refers to “a variable which increases the predictive validity of another variable (or set of variables) by its inclusion in a regression equation” (Conger, 1974, p.36). A suppressor variable works like a cleansing agent for the variance of the predictor variables by suppressing the irrelevant information within the predictors. The only function of AOC in the model is to clear performance-irrelevant variance from the other predictors.

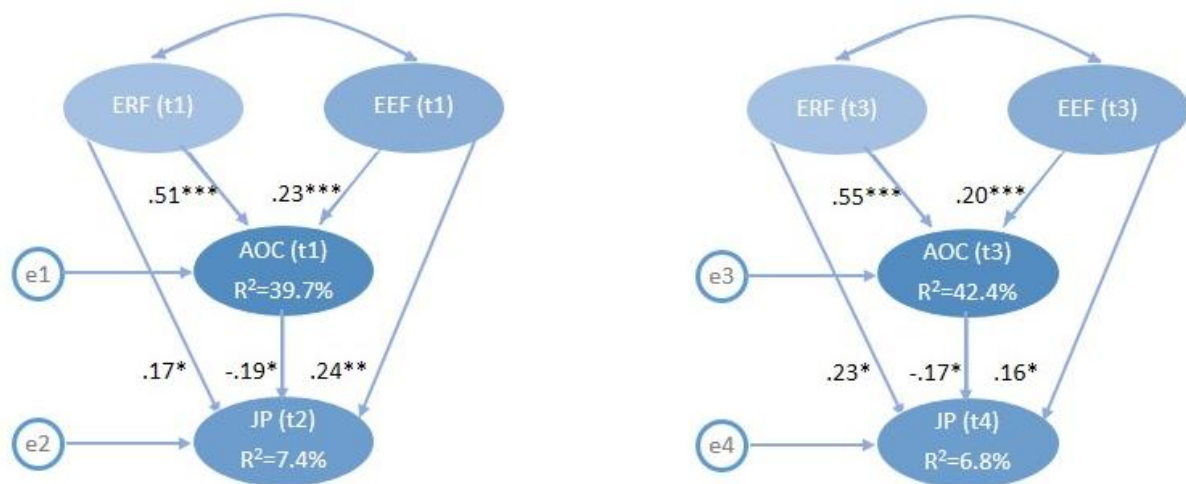
The results suggest that AOC is not a predictor of job performance, however, it can improve the way the fulfilment of psychological contract explain the dependent variable. Figure 4.1 illustrates the relationship between the constructs at Times 1 and 2, and Times 3 and 4. The regression weights between AOC and job performance were significant and negative both times.

According to Maassen and Bakker (2001, p.242), “this reflects the fact that the irrelevant elements from the predictor are partialled out, which ‘purifies’ the predictor and improves the prediction”. This is the expected behavior of a suppressor variable, when it is positively correlated with the predictor. This does not mean, however, that AOC has a negative relationship with job performance.

If a variable is revealed to be a suppressor in a model, and “a path coefficient between this variable and the dependent variable has been found with a sign opposite to that hypothesized, one should not conclude that a direct effect contrary to that expected is operating” (Maassen & Bakker, 2001, p.268).

The sign of the coefficient of AOC switches in combination with the explanatory variables of fulfilment of psychological contract. It does not make sense to interpret the coefficient of AOC as a direct effect in the strict sense (Maassen & Bakker, 2001).

The interpretation of the effects should be combined, and the resulting composite from the whole model may be meaningful. These results mean that to understand the relationship between psychological contract fulfilment and job performance we have to eliminate the effect that respondents may perform better only because of their level of AOC.

Figure 4.1 Theoretical model results

Notes. N=202. ERF= Employer Obligations Fulfilment; EEF= Employee Obligations Fulfilment. AOC= Affective Organizational Commitment. JP= Job Performance. Standardized regression weights are reported. Two Tailed Significance. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$. R^2 = explained variance.

In order to better understand the relationship between these variables, we simulate the models that relate the variables of psychological contract fulfilment to job performance criteria instead of the measure of overall job performance with and without AOC. The criteria evaluated were assiduity, discipline, sense of initiative, responsibility and productivity, as shown in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3 Explained Variance of Performance Criteria

Criterion	(t2) ← (t1)			(t4) ← (t3)		
	R^2 without AOC	R^2 with AOC	Δ	R^2 without AOC	R^2 with AOC	Δ
assiduity	6.0	7.1	1.1	3.3	4.1	0.8
discipline	3.8	4.8	1.0	2.9	3.9	1.0
initiative	3.9	9.0	5.1	4.3	5.9	1.6
productivity	3.6	8.8	5.2	5.2	8.8	3.6
responsibility	4.8	7.0	2.2	5.2	6.7	1.5

Notes. AOC= Affective Organizational Commitment. R^2 = explained variance. R^2 is expressed in percentage.

In the analysis of the standardized direct effects of AOC on the job performance criteria, the relationship between AOC and the criteria for assiduity and discipline was not significant at any time. Furthermore, we found that there was no significant relationship between AOC and the criteria for assiduity and discipline. The addition of AOC to the model increases the variance explained slightly by these two criteria - around 1%. Regarding the responsibility criterion, only in the analysis of Time 1 compared to Time 2 the standardized direct effects of AOC on it was significant. As for the criteria of initiative and productivity, relationships were significant for all analysis. The increase in explanatory power for these two criteria for inclusion in the model of AOC was around 5% in the first measure. Given these results, the suppression effect was investigated in AOC prediction relationship between the variables of psychological contract fulfilment and these two criteria, as shown in Table 4.4.

Finally, the measures of psychological contract (i.e. fulfilment of employer and employee obligations), AOC and the global measure of performance at times were integrated in models of mediation, indirect effects and no mediation. The fit for each model is shown in Table 4.5.

Table 4.4 Standardized Direct and Indirect Effects on Job Performance Criteria

Relationship	Direct Beta without AOC		Direct Beta with AOC		Indirect Beta	
	(t2)←(t1)	(t4)←(t3)	(t2)←(t1)	(t4)←(t3)	(t2)←(t1)	(t4)←(t3)
Initiative ← ERF	.054 <i>ns</i>	.180*	.203*	.270**	-.149**	-.090*
Initiative ← EEF	.172*	.055 <i>ns</i>	.239**	.087 <i>ns</i>	-.067**	-.032*
Productivity ← ERF	.028 <i>ns</i>	.183**	.180*	.319**	-.151**	-.137**
Productivity ← EEF	.177*	.081 <i>ns</i>	.245**	.130+	-.068**	-.049**

Notes. N=202. ERF= Employer Obligations Fulfilment; EEF= Employee Obligations Fulfilment. AOC= Affective Organizational Commitment. Two Tailed Significance. *ns*=non significant, +p<.10, *p<.05, **p<.01.

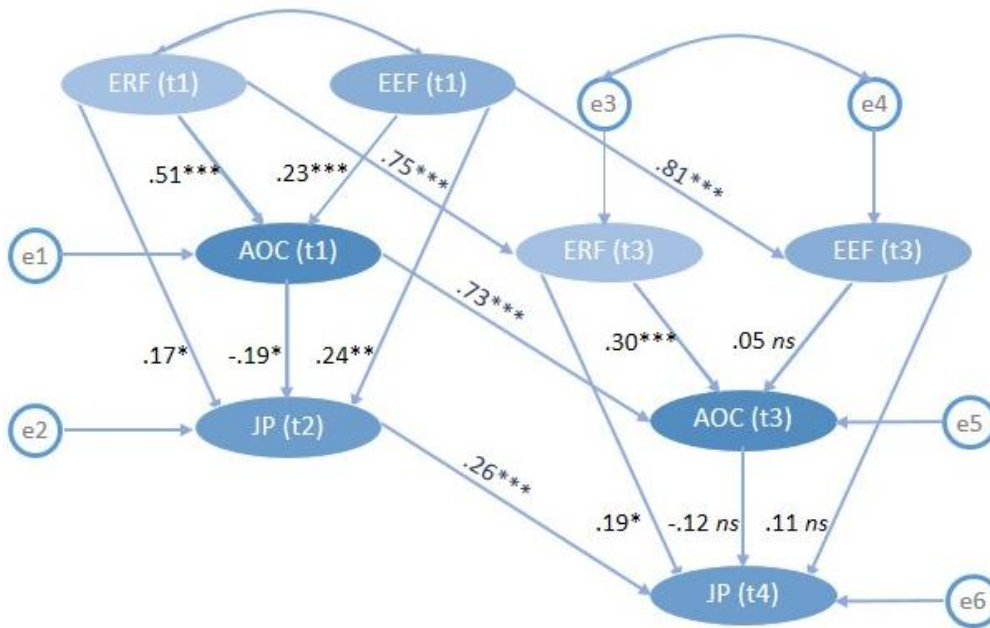
Table 4.5 Goodness-of-fit indices for alternative models

Model tested	χ^2	df	p	RMSEA	SRMR	GFI	AGFI	NFI	CFI
Mediation	27.449	12	.007	.080	.017	.970	.911	.973	.985
Indirect Effects	50.869	16	.000	.104	.074	.942	.870	.951	.965
No mediation	226.508	16	.000	.256	.239	.825	.607	.780	.790
Independence model	1028.880	28	.000	.422	-	.465	.312	.000	.000

Notes. N=202.

The goodness-of-fit indices leave no doubt that the model that best fit the data was Mediation. It was the only model in that the ratio χ^2/df was less than 3, in that the value of RMSEA was acceptable, and AGFI was greater than .90. The chi square difference test also confirmed that Mediation was the model that had the best fit to the data. The final model integrated the measures over time and is shown in Figure 4.2.

Notice that the effects of the second measure of each variable were mediated by the first measure; however, the effects of fulfilment of employer obligations remained significant. AOC at Time 3 had 86.3% of the variance explained, and job performance at t4 had 12.3% of the variance explained. In the analysis of this model for each of the job performance criteria, the explanation remains around 12% for the initiative, productivity and responsibility, and decreases for assiduity (9.8%) and discipline (6.9%). These results suggest that assiduity and discipline depend less on fulfilment of the psychological contract and AOC than the other job performance criteria.

Figure 4.2 Longitudinal model results

Notes. N=202. Standardized regression weights are reported. Two Tailed Significance. *ns*=non-significant, * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

4.5 Discussion

The results of this study support the notion that the relationship between psychological contract fulfilment and AOC is positive, as previous research has shown (Conway & Briner, 2002; McInnis et al., 2009). This means that when employees feel that their psychological contracts have been fulfilled by the employer and by themselves, they become more committed to the organization.

These findings show that psychological contract fulfilment has considerable explanatory power in relation to AOC - around 40%. Furthermore, the results suggest that psychological contract fulfilment is positively related to job performance, in agreement with the findings of earlier research (Conway & Coyle-Shapiro, 2011; Turnley et al., 2003). That is, when employees feel that their psychological contracts have been fulfilled by the employer and by themselves, they perform better. On their

own, the variables of psychological contract fulfilment explain 5% of the variance in the job performance variable. In an analysis with AOC, the explanatory power increases.

The relationship between AOC and job performance proved to be insignificant both in correlational terms and in terms of regression weights. These findings suggest that AOC has no effect on job performance. Accordingly, results for the effects of AOC on job performance are not conclusive in the literature, pointing to weak effects, if any. Alone, AOC has no explanatory power in relation to job performance. Nevertheless, the results revealed here suggest that AOC carries a kind of mediation in the relationship between fulfilment of the psychological contract and job performance.

Unexpectedly, the results showed inconsistent mediation, also known as suppression. AOC represents a generative mechanism through which the fulfilment of the psychological contract is able to predict job performance. The results showed that when employees feel that their psychological contracts have been fulfilled, they become more affectively committed to the organization, and that when employees feel that their psychological contracts have been fulfilled, they perform better. Notice that, given the results, there is a missing link in this model. One cannot say that when employees are more affectively committed to the organization, they perform better. There is no such direct relationship; however, there are observable effects of the level of AOC. One of the goals of this study is to facilitate the understanding of how these effects occur (albeit indirectly).

A metaphor may help us to understand these results. Books on the top of a bookcase represent the best job performances. The steps of a ladder represent all the numerous predictors of job performance metaphorically. This ladder is necessary to reach the highest books. However, the results show that AOC is not conducive to achieving better performances. It is not a step on the ladder, while the fulfilment of the

psychological contract is. In this metaphor, AOC would be such a difference in how much an individual that tries to reach books on top of the bookcase can stretch his/her arms. Note that a ladder is essential for everyone, regardless of arms length, as AOC alone does not predict job performance. The issue of length and stretching of the arms is that between two people with the same height ladder (i.e. similar levels of fulfilment of psychological contract); one person can reach higher books than the other person can reach.

Within the metaphor, for the model that considers only the variables of psychological contract and job performance, we would had measured the height of the ladder. In the model that considers the three constructs, we would had measured the total height achieved, taking into account the how much each person can stretch his/her arms. The arms length provides a better estimate of height of the book reached (i.e. greater explanatory power in relation to job performance), but only by means of the ladder (i.e. the fulfilment of the psychological contract). Therefore, the difference due to different levels of AOC must be discounted and for the same reason, the signs of regression weights are negative. To understand the relationship between fulfilment of the psychological contract and job performance, we have to eliminate the effect that respondents may perform better only because of their level of AOC.

In this analysis, it is important to remember that, unlike psychological contract and AOC, which express a set of beliefs and attitudes, job performance expresses a set of behaviors. Within the metaphor, the individual may be fully able to reach the highest book, with the ladder at hand, but the act of climbing does not occur. The multidimensionality of the job performance behavior makes it an extreme complex object of research.

The seriousness with which supervisors value the appraisal process is one of the plausible reasons why it is so difficult to relate organizational commitment and job performance. The supervisory ratings of job performance are also subject to a number of biases explained by the theory of social cognition and the attribution theory (Heider, 1958; Uleman, Saribay & Gonzalez, 2008). On the other hand, self-reported measures might cause socially desirable responses and biases explained by the self-perception theory. It must also be noted that although the job performance measure is a consistent measure, the performance management system of the organization studied enabled a small performance differentiation of individuals.

In the context of the appraisal process in this organization there is an incentive (albeit undeclared) for the evaluators to focus around the value 3. This is because all the other values must be justified, i.e. if the evaluator gives a score 1, 2 or 4, they must prepare a justification for such that negative or positive scores. Managers who wish to avoid the difficult task of evaluating and possible resulting conflicts tend to be lenient and assign all appraisals with the same score, i.e. 3. With a scale ranging from 1 to 4, the mean values obtained for the variable of job performance were greater than 3.5.

Another point that influences the quality of the appraisals is that the managers in Brazilian public organizations do not have direct power to dismiss or to raise salaries. A legal barrier prevents managers from offering any kind of consequence for negative job performance or of compensation for positive job performance. Aware of the difficulties that public management encounters in punishing or correcting unsatisfactory job performance and in search of job stability, many individuals may apply to work in public services only to secure salary. They do not need to worry about performing well, and there are few mechanisms to compensate them if they do perform well.

Apart from individual differences and the willingness to perform, there are external factors outside the control of the individual involved in his/her job performance, such as the organizational support, clarity of roles, which reduces the ambiguity or conflict, and competitiveness within the organization. How does the individual react to the lack of organizational support, lack of clarity of roles, the conflict environment, and the lack of recognition or perception of injustice? Hirschman (1970) divided the responses of the individuals in states of dissatisfaction into two categories: “the exit” that means leaving the organization, and “the voice” which is an active attempt by the individual to improve conditions.

When both options are available, what causes individuals to choose stay instead exit is loyalty. However, when there is no feeling of loyalty and the cost of exit is high (e.g. there are no better job options), the exit is not really an option, and the individual remains with the organization, despite the dissatisfaction. In these situations, the passive waiting may lead to negligence (Turnley & Feldman, 1999).

Considering the organizational setting of job security, relatively high earnings, and limited pay-performance link, the exit may not be the most preferred option. If, in addition, there are difficulties in communication, the individual tends to accommodate her/himself in passive hopes of an improvement. This standby behavior is reflected in lack of concern about productivity, lack of initiative and especially apathy, submission and high dependence on supervisors. Note that by choosing this passive option, the individual does not necessarily affect their levels of discipline or assiduity. On the other hand, their level of initiative and productivity tend to be seriously affected.

The results of this research show that the level of AOC makes practically no difference to assiduity and discipline, because the indirect effects are insignificant. The fulfilment of the psychological contract itself explains little variance in the criteria of

assiduity and discipline. The lowest level of explanation was obtained for the criterion of discipline, which does not depend on either AOC or even the fulfilment of the psychological contract. Moreover, the influence of the levels of psychological contract fulfilment and AOC is greater on the criteria of initiative and productivity than on other criteria, which suggests that the influence is greater on the in-role than on the extra-role performance. AOC plays a suppression role, especially in relation to fulfilment of employer obligations in predicting initiative and productivity. This means that different levels of AOC affect the explanatory power of psychological contract fulfilment in relation to initiative and productivity more.

4.6 Conclusion

This study advances prior research by showing that the job performance might be better predicted by a combination of variables, such as the case in this study. The results of this study show how the variables of fulfilment of the psychological contract, considering both the obligations of the employer and the employee, explain job performance. The relationship between AOC and job performance remains a research challenge. However, this study provides insights that can contribute to the solution of this difficult issue and has useful implications for organizational practice.

Oft expectation fails, and most oft there
where most it promises; and oft it hits
where hope is coldest; and despair most fits
William Shakespeare

Study 4

Chapter 5: Affective Organizational Commitment, Psychological Contract Fulfilment and Job Performance: a Longitudinal Within Subjects Quantitative Study of Newcomers Trajectories - Study 4

5.1 Introduction

Organizational commitment and psychological contract are constructs that develop over time (Conway & Briner, 2005; Mowday et al., 1982). The development may result in trajectories of weakening, strengthening, or stabilizing of these employee-organization linkages. The assumption is that fulfilment of the psychological contract by the employer and high levels of employees' organizational commitment have desirable consequences, such as better job performance (Cooper-Hakim & Viswesvaran, 2005; Riketta, 2008; Conway & Coyle-Shapiro, 2011). Although these three constructs (i.e. psychological contract, organizational commitment and job performance) each have a long tradition of research separately, taken together they are relatively isolated with little communication between them.

This study reports the findings of a qualitative study, which followed the development of the psychological contract, organizational commitment and job performance of newcomers during the first three years of their work in a Brazilian public sector agency. It builds on earlier quantitative studies whose findings suggest that breaches and violations in psychological contracts are associated with lower organizational commitment and job performance (Bunderson, 2001; Chen, et al., 2008; Lester et al., 2002; Restubog, Bordia & Tang, 2006). Thus, this study complements a longitudinal quantitative survey within subjects conducted in parallel. The results of the quantitative research are partly used and are examined in conjunction with the qualitative data. By adopting a qualitative approach, it examines and provides

background for the discussion of assumptions on which most of the earlier quantitative studies have been based. The main goal of this study is to contribute to the understanding of the dynamic formation of the psychological contract and organizational commitment as a process that develops over time and of the relationship of these two constructs with the job performance over time. Therefore, the following overall research question is formulated:

To what extent may the developmental trajectories of organizational commitment result from changes in psychological contracts and affect individual job performance?

5.2 Organizational Commitment Theory

Organizational commitment is often defined as a linkage, bond, or attachment of the individual to the organization (Buchanan, 1974; Klein, Molloy & Cooper, 2009; O'Reilly & Chatman, 1986). However, this general definition combines fundamentally different attitudinal phenomena (Solinger et al., 2008). In the three-component model of organizational commitment, there are different reasons for individuals to remain attached to the organization and each reason represents one base of the model. The first reason is that the individuals like and are proud of working for the organization; the second reason is that they feel obligated to; and the third reason is if they perceive a lack of alternatives (Meyer & Herscovitch, 2001; Meyer & Allen, 1991).

The first reason refers to affective organizational commitment (AOC) that highlights the emotional nature that characterizes the linkage between the person and the organization. The second is also known as normative commitment, a bond that is kept only due to a feeling of obligation. The bond that is kept only because the

individuals have no other choice is also known as continuance commitment. Perhaps because the three components evolve from different causes, they have different consequences. The three-component model of organizational commitment has been conceptually criticized in that the three bases are possibly three distinct constructs (Magalhães, 2008; Rodrigues, 2009; Silva, 2009; Solinger et al., 2008). We are especially interested in AOC because this type of bond has the strongest correlations with desirable behaviors at work (Meyer et al., 2002). Meanwhile, the normative and continuance commitment usually present a negative correlation for the same behaviors (Maia & Bastos, 2011; Rodrigues & Bastos, 2010; Silva & Bastos, 2010).

With the passing of time, over the socialization phases, AOC of newcomers develops in different ways. We designed the present research aiming to address issues of the anticipatory and the encounter phases of the socialization process (Van Maanen, 1976). The anticipatory stage is the period before entry, when the newcomers may become aware of information or stories that shape their expectations of the workplace they are about to enter. The newcomer forms expectations about the job and experiences anxiety about the fitting between her/himself and the organization (Feldman, 1976). During the encounter stage, s/he attempts to reduce uncertainty with regard to tasks and roles acquiring skills and knowledge. This is when the 'reality shock' occurs and it is expected to be followed by adjustment of expectations. (Fisher, 1986; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979).

In a study with newcomers over 25 consecutive weeks, Solinger et al. (2013) proposed a taxonomy of three scenarios, identifying trajectories of weakening, strengthening, and stabilizing of organizational commitment. The stable trajectory is the scenarios which maintains the bond over time, e.g. if the commitment was initially strong, it is sustained this way over time, it is a *High Match*. The *Learning to Love*

scenario represents the trajectory of strengthening, in the cases where the newcomer has initially low commitment which then steadily increases. The *Honeymoon Hangover* scenario represents a weakening after entry of the bond which was initially strong. This has been discussed in previous studies (Cropanzano, James, & Konovsky, 1993; Veninga & Spradley, 1981).

In the search for an explanation for the different AOC levels among individuals, studies have found strong evidence linking AOC to factors related to work experience (Morrow, 2011; Meyer et al., 2002). Through the socialization stages, employees experience an adjustment process with the most notable changes being expected arising from negative work experiences following the “reality shock” (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979; Meyer & Allen, 1997). Considering early work experiences, the unmet pre-entry expectations predict lower AOC later after hire (Dean, Ferris & Konstans, 1988; Earl & Bright, 2007; Major, Kozlowski, Chao, & Gardner, 1995; Meyer & Allen, 1988; Takeuchi & Takeuchi, 2009).

Generally, the effects of the work experience and management practices to which the individual is subjected after joining the organization were found to be of more importance to AOC than those involving personal characteristics (Meyer et al., 2002). Among the work experience variables, Morrow (2011) presented broad categories inductively created based chiefly on common themes: socialization, organizational changes, human resource practices, interpersonal relations, and employee–organizational relations. The quality of the leader–member exchange was found to be related to the levels of AOC (Epitropaki & Martin, 2005; Fry, Vitucci, & Cedillo, 2005). Tyagi and Wotruba (1993) found AOC to be related to organizational climate. Johnston, Griffeth, Burton and Carson (1993) investigated the effects of promotion on AOC. These authors found that AOC levels of promoted employees

decreased less than that of other employees. The perceived organizational support was positively related to AOC in previous research (Eisenberger, Huntington & Sowa, 1986; Vandenberghe, Bentein, & Stinglhamber, 2004; Thompson, Jahn, Kopelman, & Prottas, 2004). In sum, situational factors can lead to changes in AOC levels and hence may be related to the different organizational commitment trajectories.

This study aims to illustrate the influence of work experience variables on organizational commitment and address a broader perspective than the research in increasing or how to increase organizational commitment. Not because there is interest in reducing levels of organizational commitment, but rather preventing them from falling. As highlighted by Morrow (2011), there is an organizational reticence to address the cases of low organizational commitment. Preventing organizational commitment levels progressively decreasing dramatically to the point at which the individual has no further commitment to the organization may be even more important than understanding the mechanisms for managing the growth of medium to high commitment levels.

5.2.1 Organizational Commitment and Psychological Contract

The concept of psychological contract is linked to organizational commitment, since beliefs about the job agreement bind the involved parties to some set of obligations one to the other (Rousseau, 1989). The psychological contract is the set of beliefs about the reciprocal obligations between individual and organization (Rousseau, 1995; Morrison & Robinson, 1997). The fulfilment of these obligations determines the state of psychological contract (Guest & Conway, 2002). A breach of a psychological contract occurs when the individual perceives that the obligations that s/he believes to exist between the parties have been non-fulfilled (Robinson & Morrison, 2000). The violation

of a psychological contract is an emotional experience of disappointment, frustration, anger and resentment that might emanate from the way the employee interprets and feels about the psychological contract breaches and their circumstances (Morrison & Robinson, 1997, p. 242).

Studies generally report a negative relationship between breaches in psychological contract and organizational commitment (Cassar & Briner, 2011; Lapointe et al., 2013; Ng et al., 2010). Specifically in the public sector, this negative relationship was supported by Coyle-Shapiro and Kessler' (2000) study in the United Kingdom. The effects of violation in psychological contract on organizational commitment have been investigated in the public sector in the context of different countries, e.g. in Greece by Simosi (2013); in India by Shahnawaz and Goswami (2011); in Canada by Lemire and Rouillard (2005); in Australia by Knights and Kennedy (2005); and in Malta by Cassar (2001). The general conclusion of these studies is that violations in psychological contract are negatively related to organizational commitment.

The fulfilment of the psychological contract, on the other hand, was found to have a positive impact on AOC of public sector employees (Parzefall, 2008). In a study with public employees in the United Kingdom, Coyle-Shapiro and Kessler (2003) supported the finding that the employees offer their commitment to an organization in reciprocity to the treatment received by it. In a study of civil servants in France, Castaing (2006) found a significant association between psychological contract variables and AOC.

Some studies investigated the relationship between the types of psychological contract and organizational commitment. One typology that has dominated the research is transactional-relational distinction (MacNeil, 1985). While the relational contracts are

broader and more open-ended, the transactional contract is of narrow scope and concerned fundamentally with an economic transaction, e.g. the payment for a specific task (Conway & Briner, 2005). The studies found transactional contracts to be negatively correlated with organizational commitment (Philipp & Lopez, 2013; Raja et al., 2004; McInnis et al., 2009). Therefore, we present the first research question:

How are the fulfilment of psychological contract and the work experience variables related to newcomers' trajectories of organizational commitment?

5.2.2 Organizational Commitment and Job Performance

AOC has been related to organization-relevant outcomes as organizational citizenship behavior and job performance in previous studies (Meyer et al, 2002). Job performance is an object of investigation endowed with a wide heterogeneity in theorizing and methodological operationalization (Grote, 2003; Iaffaldano & Muchinsky, 1985; Manning & Barrette, 2005). We refer to job performance as the behavior that is relevant to the organization goals and that can be measured (Campbell, 1999). Traditionally, studies turn towards the investigation of job performance management in organizational environments and their consequences, measures, nuances and biases.

Job performance management is “a process consisting of managerial behaviors aimed at defining, measuring, motivating, and developing the desired performance of employees” (Kinicki, Jacobson, Peterson & Prussia, 2013, p.4). The findings of the meta-analysis studies suggest that commitment has effect (albeit weak) on job performance (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Meyer et al. 2002; Riketta, 2002; Riketta, 2008). Findings on the relationship commitment-job performance are generally non-conclusive

(Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Meyer et al. 2002; Mowday et al., 1982). Taking into consideration previous studies, we present our second research question:

How are the trajectories of organizational commitment related to the job performance of newcomers?

5.3 Organizational Context – Brazilian Public Sector

This research was conducted in an autonomous federal government agency that has about 4,000 employees. In the job market, the agency offers comparatively high salaries and performance-pay link is limited. The organizational context is of low attrition and high job security, as long-term employment is guaranteed by the agency. In Brazil, stability is afforded to public employees to ensure that they remain in public service. It is achieved only after fulfilling certain requirements, such as passing job performance appraisals and remaining for the probationary period of three years actively working on the job.

Until 1998, a public employee only could be dismissed in cases of serious misconduct, which rarely occurred and even if it did, the decision was usually overturned in the courts in favor of the employee (Brazil, 1998). From 1998 on, an employee may also be dismissed for poor job performance or for excess expenditure on personnel from the government budget. However, in practice, cases of dismissal remain rare. There are cultural barriers both to correcting any unsatisfactory performance, and highlighting positive performance.

In Brazil, someone who wants to make a career, ostensibly for its high performance is, as a rule, hostilized, because (...) s/he imposes on everyone (...) the explicitness of a competition (...) that creates an

aggressive environment due to the hierarchy that will establish if s/he has her/his recognition. (Barbosa, 1996, p. 90)

A crucial issue in the practice of meritocracy is the difficulty of establishing individual differences in terms of talent and productivity among employees.

5.4 Method

We conducted the interviews while also doing the quantitative study. Triangulation of methods was used to maximize the quality and validity of the theoretical contributions made (Flick, 2009). The study had as population 361 newcomers who had passed the competitive selection process that took place in 2010 to select civil servants for a Brazilian public sector agency.

5.4.1 Quantitative assessment: the sample, procedures and measures

We conducted the first survey during the orientation training before entry. In the invitation e-mail, a text presented the study along with an external link to the questionnaire. The newcomers received the invitation to answer the survey by e-mail during the orientation training (t1= Time 1), then approximately one year after entry (t2), and again approximately three years after entry (t3). The survey length was chosen to cover the probationary period of three years necessary to achieve stability. In the end 202 newcomers participated in all three surveys.

Affective organizational commitment was calibrated with an instrument composed of 4 items from the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ) developed by Mowday et al. (1979), translated and adapted for Brazil by Borges-

Andrade et al. (1989); and of 3 items from the Affective Commitment Scale (ACS) developed by Allen and Meyer (1990), translated and adapted for Brazil by Medeiros and Enders (1998). Illustrative items are “I talk about this organization to my friends as a great organization to work for”, and “This organization has a great deal of personal meaning for me”. We assessed AOC at Times 1, 2, and 3, on a Likert Scale ranging from 1= strongly disagree to 5= strongly agree.

We calibrated the fulfilment of psychological contract with an instrument composed of 20 items developed for this study. Illustrative items of employer and employee obligations are “provide autonomy to do my job”, and “bring own ideas and creativity into this firm”. We assessed the fulfilment of the psychological contract at Times 2 and 3 by asking respondents to indicate on a 5-point scale ranging from ‘not at all’ to ‘overcame’. We assessed job performance by supervisor ratings in performance appraisals undertaken by the organization in periods near to Times 2 and 3. They used a 4-point scale, however, to protect the identity of the participants we did not report the exact values.

5.4.2 Qualitative assessment: interviewee selection and procedure

At the end of the first questionnaire, respondents were asked to state whether they would agree to be interviewed. One hundred and forty-two people volunteered to be interviewed. The selection of these respondents resulted from an exploratory analysis of the results of the first collection, which identified extreme cases of individuals with the highest and lowest levels of AOC. We interviewed 18 individuals on the first and second days at work (t1= Time 1), 18 individuals approximately one year after entry (t2), and 13 individuals few months before they complete three years of employment, just after the last job performance evaluation that concluded the probationary period

(t3). The interviewees in the first round were representative of different levels of propensity to commitment and with different personal characteristics. Throughout this study, we sought to maintain this representative picture of diversity. However, during the course of the study, a few participants withdrew from the study for various reasons. Our concern was to avoid that willingness to be interviewed was mainly maintained by those who wanted to complain about the organization.

In the end, 10 individuals were interviewed at the three times, and nine of them answered the quantitative survey at all times as well. Given this, we conducted some analyses to investigate the possibility of bias produced by attrition. We observe that, despite the loss, the different trajectories continued to be representative. We analysed the quantitative results of the nine participants who were interviewed at the three times and answered all the data collections made, and identified four patterns of trajectories among them.

The first trajectory is represented by one individual who had increased levels of AOC at all times. AOC levels of this individual increased gradually and consistently over the years. This steadily increasing pattern of commitment was named “*Learning to Love*” by Solinger et al. (2013). The second trajectory is represented by three individuals who had a stable trajectory, maintaining the bond over time. The commitment level was initially high and it was sustained this way over time. This trajectory was named “*High Match*” (Solinger et al., 2013). The third trajectory is represented by three individuals with steadily decreasing commitment, and it was named “*Honeymoon Hangover*” (Solinger et al., 2013). The fourth group is represented by two individuals who began working with the high AOC levels and after three years their AOC levels decreased significantly. We named this trajectory as “*Learning to*

Hate". The decreased AOC levels of these individuals were consistent and more intense than for other newcomers.

As reported, the trajectory *Learning to Love* had one representative case, the *High Match* and *Honeymoon Hangover* trajectories had three representative cases each, and the trajectory *Learning to Hate* had two representative cases. Nevertheless, we chose to report the analysis of interviews of six individuals for the sake of parsimony. The information considering the nine individuals showed a high degree of redundancy. Therefore, we selected the most characteristic and extreme cases, with greater potential collaboration for the interpretation of the phenomena under study. The cases were discussed, compared and interpreted. We analysed 18 interviews (i.e. six individuals who were interviewed three times each) in parallel with the results of the quantitative study. Inferring characteristics of the population from the cases was not an objective of the present study.

We interviewed each individual for approximately one and a half hours each Time. We conducted the semi-structured interviews in a meeting room. It was reinforced by the interviewer that it was a survey in no way connected to the human resources department of the organization, conducted under academic supervision. Confidentiality was formally guaranteed and participation in the study was voluntary. The structure of the interviews was designed in order to guide the assessment and all the interviewees were asked the same questions. However, the respondents were free to report their work experiences in the organization in their own way. During the first round of interviews participants were asked to answer three core questions covering: a) their expectations about work and the possible effects of this on their commitment; b) what they believe that the organization expect from them and the possible effects on their commitment of this; c) what working in that organization meant to them. On the

second and third interviews, we added two more questions: d) if they had experienced any critical events that led them to feel disappointed or frustrated; and e) how the work experiences affected their organizational commitment and job performance over time. In order to improve the confirmability of the generated knowledge, the interviewer presented to the interviewee at the end of each interview an interpretative review of each answer given to the interviewer and confirmed if the interpretation was accurate (Flick, 2009).

5.4.3 Analytic Strategy

The interviews were taped and transcribed in full. To ensure the confidentiality of information and anonymity of participants, we omitted information such as age, gender, marital status, department in the organization where they work or have worked and specific experiences. Fictitious names were chosen in honor of great painters. The interviews were carried out in Portuguese and the transcribed segments here were freely translated. The segments of the interviews reported in this study can be found in Appendix E in the original language, i.e. Portuguese.

We analysed the data resulting from the qualitative assessment using content analysis to identify categories and themes related to each category that emerged from the interviews. We did not use any special software for qualitative data analysis. Four categories were created due to content analysis: organizational commitment, pre-entry expectations, psychological contract development and job performance. The findings and the theory were built inductively.

5.5 Results

Results are presented in two parts. First, we report the quantitative results of AOC, psychological contract fulfilment and job performance of the respondents at Times 1, 2 and 3 grouped by trajectories. Second, we report the qualitative results related with pre-entry expectations that were expressed by the newcomers at the first interview and the results about AOC, psychological contract development and job performance from the analysis of the interviews at Times 2 and 3 grouped by trajectories.

5.5.1 Results of the quantitative assessment

Table 5.1 reports the observed levels of AOC, psychological contract fulfilment, and information about job performance of the respondents grouped by trajectories. Of the total sample, approximately 9% showed the pattern of development of the levels of AOC similar to that shown by the *Learning to Love* trajectory. Another 32% developed AOC levels over time similar to the pattern represented by the *High Match* trajectory, 33% similar to the *Honeymoon Hangover* trajectory, and 14% similar to the *Learning to Hate* trajectory. Twelve percent of subjects had other developmental trajectories of AOC such as Moderate and Low Match, or a history of ups and downs in AOC levels over time.

Table 5.1 Affective Organizational Commitment Trajectories, Psychological Contract Fulfilment, and Job Performance

Case	Trajectory	Affective Organizational Commitment			Psychological Contract Fulfilment				Job Performance
					Employer Obligations		Employee Obligations		
		(t1)	(t2)	(t3)	(t2)	(t3)	(t2)	(t3)	
Miró	Learning to Love	3.57	3.86	4.71	2.33	3.40	2.73	3.27	Rising from medium to maximum
Michelangelo	High Match	5.00	5.00	4.71	3.53	2.73	3.67	3.67	Stabilized at maximum
Paul		4.57	4.57	4.43	3.33	2.73	3.67	3.93	Rising from minimum* to maximum
Gustav	Honeymoon Hangover	4.57	3.57	3.29	3.53	2.33	3.13	3.13	Rising from minimum* to medium
Claude		3.57	3.29	3.00	3.20	2.87	3.80	3.67	Rising gradually around the median values
Vincent	Learning to Hate	4.43	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	3.50	3.54	Decreasing from medium to minimum*

Notes. 't' before a number indicates 'Time' (e.g., t1 = Time1). Affective Organizational Commitment and Psychological Contract Fulfilment are expressed on a 5-point scale.

* Minimum acceptable for approval on probationary period.

5.5.2 *Learning to Love Trajectory*

The main reasons that led Miró, the representative of the *Learning to Love* trajectory to choose this organization to work for were associated with the salary and status. He hoped to find an infrastructure similar to what he had in his previous job, but to a lesser extent. Miró's expectations were formed from information he received from many people he knew who were already working in the organization. Miró had positive expectations about the working environment and expected to find rapport with people easy. According to the representative of the *Learning to Love* trajectory, his level of commitment to the organization did not change significantly over the first three years of work, and it was a relationship that has developed gradually.

I do not tend to be the type who wears the shirt and goes out selling the organization very much, I'm not that profile, but I'm not the opposite type either, that ceases to defend when must to defend. (...) When asked, yes, I usually defend and I feel proud. (...) I accepted the position in which I find myself and so I am working there trying to offer the best I can, in the place where I find myself today. (Miró, 2013, 1).

Miró reported a slight disappointment concerning his initial position in the organization. He would have liked to have had the opportunity to continue working with the subject with which he had worked in the previous organization, with which he had experience and knowledge. Despite feeling that he was going backwards, he said that he would try to apply the knowledge he had and try to contribute to the organization in some way. According to him, despite having an unmet expectation, he did not feel frustrated because the situation offered an opportunity to learn. In the interview, he said he knew how to handle this small disappointment and believed that he was dealing with the situation well. Another unmet pre-entry expectation was reported by Miró regarding organizational characteristics:

My expectation was that it was a little better, but I think it is more or less into like I expected. Some things I realized that are better, and others I realized that here I think there is a very bureaucratic way to achieve a certain thing that could be simpler. But I perceive this as characteristics of the structure itself [of the organization], and so I don't see it as a defect, I think it is about the average. (Miró, 2011, 1)

The only frustration reported by Miró was in relation to how salary negotiations were carried out, nothing more. The report of Miró was positive in all other aspects. He mentioned satisfaction with regard to the issue of flexibility of working hours and for negotiation of holidays. Miró expected to find well-qualified people and said, “in fact, I checked and confirmed. I realized that there are real talents here”. The manager positively surprised Miró:

The management tried to maintain close contact, this aspect I found very positive. He created a space in his schedule to talk to the newcomers, understand the perception that we had on arrival, it was once or twice, but I thought it was very important, although they were brief moments. (Miró, 2011, 2)

About his job performance, Miró said that he was trying to adapt to the job and taking what had been given to him as a challenge. According to him, from time to time he realized that his work was valued. Miró pointed out that, despite hearing that the supervisors had the habit of simply giving the highest score to everyone in the performance evaluation, his supervisor had not done this, and he perceived it as a very positive thing. According to Miró, the supervisor gave him scores and justified them, talking to him, praising what had to be commended and explaining how he could do better what could have been done better. Miró assessed the manager-employee relationship with regard to human resources management as very positive.

5.5.3 *High Match Trajectory*

As one of the representatives of the *High Match* trajectory, the main reason that led Michelangelo to choose the organization was the perception he had of the organization as respected, important and valued in society. Michelangelo always admired the organization a lot. This admiration was formed from what he had heard about it, that employees have many opportunities for professional development and that it was a pleasant working environment. He had expectations to develop himself and to find professional challenges.

For Paul, the other representative of the *High Match* trajectory, the main reasons why he chose to apply to work in this organization were the pay, stability and job security. Paul said he was happy to have passed in the selection process, because the organization has an image of respect in society. The expectations of Paul were also formed from the comments filled with pride that he heard from the employees of the organization. Although he said that his expectations were good, because he believed that the organization had good administrative practices, he was concerned about keeping himself free from preconceived notions, so he could "face the challenge in an unbiased way".

The representatives of the *High Match* trajectory perceived themselves as employees who are highly committed to the organization. For Michelangelo, his organizational commitment levels had not changed over the years of the study. On the other hand, according to the perception of Paul, his organizational commitment increased as a function of the increased responsibility given to him. Paul stated that he felt the need to be more committed to the organization when he began managing a team, in order to be able to encourage commitment in the people that he managed. For Paul,

his organizational commitment resulted from a process of adaptation to the organization during which he learned to like the work.

As much as possible, I try to see if we can improve or not, instead of complaining. I think it helps you to be more committed if you try not to complain, but to understand and improve, you try to commit in order to improve it. (Paul, 2013, 1)

In the first three years of work, Michelangelo said he was very happy at work. He said he liked the organization, the job, the environment and colleagues. Michelangelo did not report any disappointment or frustration. For him, everything was as he had imagined it would be. The organization exceeded expectations that Michelangelo had on the issue of flexibility of working hours and focus on results:

About this point it is well evolved, even more than I imagined I would find. It is an environment more focused on productivity rather than hours sitting in the chair, and so it becomes a much more interesting deal. (Michelangelo, 2013, 1)

On the other hand, Paul, the other illustrative case in the *High Match* trajectory, showed a bit of annoyance in relation to the way things sometimes “lock”, waiting for political decisions. However, he said that he had no different expectation and, therefore, he was not disappointed by it. Paul reported a slight disappointment related to his position in the organization. Despite this unmet expectation, he stated with an open mind:

I came with a very open mind, I was like so... [with the position] But then I said, “let's see what it is”. Some [colleagues] were very disappointed, but I was not disappointed, and I really came to realize [the situation]. (Paul, 2013, 2)

For Paul, work ceased to be the end and became the means. Paul realized that he did not feel anguish about the need to do what he likes anymore as he used to feel before. For him, this anguish had diminished with time. What is important for Paul is to

work in a place that gives him a decent job, a good salary and quality of life to enjoy the things he likes. Paul highlighted as aspects that exceeded his expectations the respect that the organization has in society, the working environment and the contact with educated and intelligent people at work.

The Representatives of the *High Match* trajectory reported that they perceived themselves as having a good job performance and stated that they felt that they were exercising a function valued by society. Paul was bothered by colleagues who, according to him, could work more and perform better. Nonetheless, he did not know how the organization could encourage those people to work more.

It's a perception that I have, there is a group that is very quiet, which is satisfied and do not want to take responsibility, but there is another group that is ambitious, seeking positions, who want the organization to grow... It's kind of a circular reasoning... You see a person who was coordinator of a department that goes to another... And you see that it was because the friend pulled this person, and so he will do a job that has nothing to do with his profile.... (Paul, 2013, 3)

5.5.4 Honeymoon Hangover Trajectory

One of the representatives of the *Honeymoon Hangover* trajectory, Claude, declared that he was really trying not to have many expectations, so he would not to be disappointed. The main reasons that led Claude to choose the organization were pay, quality of life, stability and job security. Gustav, the other representative of the trajectory, in turn, had expectations of working with friendly people and liking the work he was going to do a lot, being part of a respected organization. He reported that when he learned of the selection process, he thought of not trying because he did not believe he could pass, given the level of difficulty. He said he was very happy and proud. The main reason for

Gustav applying for the job was the stability that the organization offers amid times of crisis.

The representatives of *Honeymoon Hangover* trajectory said they felt committed to the organization. Claude declared that he always perceived himself as a highly committed employee who is proud, recommends and endorses the organization in front of others, if necessary. As for Gustav, according to some disappointments he had, he still feel committed, but does not make long-term plans with the organization any longer.

The first opportunity I have to leave, I'll leave, it's kind of, it's like I have a grudge, not that I'm expressing it every day, but the first chance I have, I get out, do you get it? I commit myself to my work daily, do not ask me for commitment for years because I cannot promise it, do you understand? (Gustav, 2013, 1).

Over the three first years working in the organization many things had changed for Gustav, even in his personal life. Changes that made him expect more of the organization than he expected before entering. Gustav reported some great disappointments, but he said that, despite everything, he still thought that it was the dream job and a job for a lifetime. Gustav was disappointed with the resistance that older employees had shown towards him. He also had expectations that the management would be more strategic than he perceived it was. The biggest disappointment, however, was:

Some values of leadership with regard to Human Resources Management were a disappointment to me. It disappointed me a lot, actually. There was not a one-off thingy that I saw, no. There were so many things, that I said, "people, how is this possible? I'm in a place where the values, theoretically, are totally opposed to the practice, so what am I doing here?" It's very against what I think... (Gustav, 2013, 2)

However, Gustav really likes his work team, has a good relationship with the supervisor and according to him, his colleagues are well qualified. Gustav was positively surprised because he learned many things he had not expected to learn. Although in the perception of Gustav there is no openness to participation, he said that he was surprised by the fact that in his area there is still some space and some freedom for creativity.

According to Claude, he had no great disappointments because he had no great expectations. Although it is not what he expected, for him it was all right. One of his unmet expectations was about his initial position in the organization. He was not pleased at first. However, according to him, it was a place that gave him opportunities and dynamic work, which he learned to like. Claude liked the fact that he did not have a routine and used to do different activities all the time. He felt that his colleagues were willing to discuss ideas with him, trusted him, and that he had openness and space. Claude had no expectations of being as well received as eventually he was and this positively surprised him. However, Claude made a caveat:

The great difficulty is that some older people have a resistance to newer ones. Feel as if we want to take their space, and I think there's space for everyone. This is the great difficulty that I see in the conviviality. (Claude, 2013, 1)

Claude hoped perform more strategic or tactical jobs but he perceived himself to be performing many operational tasks. He noted that apart from merit, other factors such as tenure or political aspects were taken into consideration for the choice of who would be promoted and this disappointed him slightly. In his opinion, however, the worst disappointment was not in relation to how people are chosen for promotion, but the absence of criteria for maintenance of people in the higher positions in the hierarchy. For Claude, higher positions should be temporary instead of permanent, and

managed as forms of recognition and appreciation. However, he realized that this was not what normally happens. After a person is promoted and holds a higher position, no one else can take this position again. Despite realizing that things were different, Claude continues to believe that the organization must arrange some form of recognition of good performance and correct bad behavior. For him, this would be the fairest way to select the occupants of the higher positions. Claude hopes that this change will occur gradually in the management of the organization. Nevertheless, the positive aspects outweigh the negative in the view of Claude, who repeatedly stated he enjoyed working in the organization during the interview. He considers the work environment very positive, peaceful, and said that his work had always been highly valued, which is important to him.

The representatives of *Honeymoon Hangover* trajectory reported having an acceptable job performance. According to Claude, he is productive at work, but there was nothing new in terms of learning, and he feels stagnant.

My profile is not to complain much about things. If this work needs to be done and it is for me to do, I'll do it. If that is the job that they gave me, I'll do it the best possible way, and that's how I've worked. But the activities were not what I expected them to be. (Claude, 2013, 2)

Claude complained about the feedback regarding his performance at work. According to him, the feedback was greatly restricted and what was required from him in terms of job performance was nothing more than the minimum, which need not have been said, such as punctuality or ethics. Representatives of this trajectory also manifested uncomfortable with the unproductive colleagues.

I see many people there that do not work and disturb the others. Beside me there is a person like this, clearly, this person does absolutely nothing and just disturbs my team and me. The boss is tired of knowing, we've talked with him, we've asked for actions and nothing, nothing is done. The answer is, "he will retire soon, folks, we

will not mess with it". How is it accepted that a person who does not want to do anything disturbs other people who are there to work? (Gustav, 2013, 2)

5.5.5 Learning to Hate Trajectory

Vincent, representing the trajectory *Learning to Hate*, was the one with the highest expectations. Like Michelangelo, he had expectations to develop and find professional challenges. Unlike the other respondents, Vincent did not mention the pay, stability or job security among the reasons for choosing the organization. Vincent emphasized the work he hoped to develop, the career that he planned to do and the respect of the organization in society were very important to him. Vincent had expectations that the organization would require a deep and highly specialized technical knowledge, and stimulate his development. Vincent said he was very happy and proud, and said that this was the place for him to work for his entire life.

I'm entering with very high expectations and hope to make a very interesting career, serving the nation in the best possible way, and even though the assignments [of the organization] are complicated, very complex, I'm really willing to study, dedicate myself and be an excellent employee. (Vincent, 2010, 1).

One year later, Vincent perceived himself as uncommitted to the organization. For him, his commitment is null and he feels no pride in working for the organization. Vincent stated that for him the organization is “over”, “has died” and has proved unworthy of his trust.

I have a deep hate, I have deep loathing of working here, I hate working here. (...) I just work here because I have nowhere else to go, unfortunately. I want to leave as quickly as possible from this place, this place makes me sick. Drop out once and never set foot here again. (...) I'm stuck ... I'm tied to the salary. Outside the situation is worse, we see the crisis out there, the private sector, no thinking. You cannot fire me, you will put up with my face and I'll put up with your faces. (Vincent, 2013, 1).

Vincent reported his entry to the organization as a moment of ecstasy and referred to the post-entry time as a hard reality shock that has even led to serious health problems. There were many disappointments according to Vincent, but those most emphasized by him were related to the work itself, organizational characteristics such as excess bureaucracy and issues concerning the lack of equality and justice in the treatment of employees. For Vincent work became an obligation mainly related to assiduity and discipline. According to Vincent, the organization would be “wonderful” for people who have no need for professional achievement and want to settle down.

If I work harder, I'll earn exactly the same pay as the guy who does precisely nothing all day and just goes on the Internet and telephone. Why should I dedicate myself? I'm not an asshole, I'm not a fool. (Vincent, 2013, 2)

Vincent said he expected nothing more from work and that he was merely following orders, no longer questioning anything. In the perception of Vincent, the organization expects him to do eight working hours a day, regardless of what he does during this time. Vincent considered the job activities to be operational and felt frustrated because he did not perceive the work that he was developing to be helpful to society. In addition, he was disappointed with the position of the leadership on the issue:

On the first day of work, the director of my area said: “if the boss asks you to stamp, you stamp well, because if you show that you stamp very well, pretty soon the boss will give you a more intellectually difficult task to do”. It's a completely distorted view. (Vincent, 2013, 3)

Vincent did not perceive support when he presented his ideas, and reported that the projects that he proposed were shelved. For him, the bosses defend maintaining their hierarchical position through centralization, maintaining a quantity of employees under

his/her command, and promoting employees with average performance, who would not pose any threat to them. Vincent reported a big disappointment regarding criteria for promotion. For him, these decisions are made because of indications, exchanging favors, personal empathy or even the ability to stick to the rules, and not pose a threat.

The perception of Vincent is that there is no respect for the rules, and although they exist, they do not apply to everyone. Vincent had the expectation of having a successful professional career, to develop and be recognized, however, he failed to put his plans into practice. For him, the relationship between boss and subordinate was bad and the hierarchy exacerbated this. Vincent was also disappointed with the human resource management policies in the organization in general. Vincent reported one special occurrence in which he lost trust in the organization. He reported that he felt betrayed, very upset and disturbed. Moreover, he did not notice any plausible explanation for what happened.

We had an agreement, and this agreement went down the drain. The changes in the game rules take place at such a great speed, that what you had agreed in the past is not valid any longer in the future, in a close and short time horizon... (Vincent, 2013, 4)

In the perception of Vincent, the disappointment was total. Vincent characterized his relationship with the organization as purely transactional in that he provides hours of his life to the organization and gets money in return. Vincent, representing the *Learning to Hate* trajectory, stated that he only does what is strictly demanded from him. He said he does not refuse to perform tasks. However, he does not look for other things to do, no initiative, nor creativity.

Bring new ideas? Am I an idiot to bring new ideas? What will I gain? Nothing! I do not want to know, no. I still do what I'm told to do because I'm not an insubordinate, I'm a professional, and I still have ethics. (Vincent, 2013, 5)

According to the opinion of Vincent, the public sector is swollen and there is no need to hire new employees. Instead, Vincent believes that there is a need to cut the number of employees in order to improve productivity.

5.6 Discussion

The results here offer some insights for the discussion of the first Research Question. Our results suggest that the fulfilment of the employer obligations in the psychological contract has a positive impact on AOC, as illustrated by the cases of Miró, Michelangelo and Paul. These results corroborate the findings of previous research (Castaing, 2006; Coyle-Shapiro & Kessler, 2003; Parzefall, 2008). The findings here also suggest that the negative post-entry experiences, breaches and violations of the psychological contract have a negative impact on AOC, as illustrated by the cases of Gustav, Claude and Vincent. These findings also corroborate the results of previous studies (Cassar, 2001; Cassar & Briner, 2011; Coyle-Shapiro & Kessler, 2000; Knights & Kennedy, 2005; Lapointe et al., 2013; Lemire & Rouillard, 2005; Ng et al, 2010; Simosi, 2013; Shahnawaz & Goswami, 2011).

This study offers background to previous findings regarding the impact of the early work experiences and the pre-entry expectations on AOC levels (Dean et al., 1988; Earl & Bright, 2007; Major et al., 1995; Meyer & Allen, 1988; Takeuchi & Takeuchi, 2009). In the case of the unmet pre-entry expectations, the impact on AOC levels is evidenced in the case of Vincent. Among all the cases analysed, Vincent showed the highest pre-entry expectations, without entertaining the possibility of disappointment at any time during the first interview. Some personal attitudes seem to improve the impact of the unmet pre-entry expectations on AOC. This is the case of Miró who perceived the unmet pre-entry expectation as a learning opportunity, and the

case of Paul, who, despite realizing that in some ways the experience was not exactly as he had thought at first, he tried not to be affected. Claude also had an attitude that mitigated the impact that unmet pre-entry expectations could have had on him. First, he tried not to generate many expectations, with the clear intention of trying to avoid possible disappointment. After joining the organization, Claude sought to perceive the opportunities that were offered and tried to like the activities that he was being given to do in the job.

Some of the results of this research suggest the relation of leader-member exchange and interpersonal relations as antecedents of AOC, strengthening previous findings (Epitropaki & Martin, 2005; Fry et al., 2005; Tyagi & Wotruba, 1993). Miró, the illustrative case of the AOC trajectory of those whose AOC levels have increased over time, perceived the quality of the leader-member exchange relationship positively and reported as a very positive the reception that the leadership gave to new employees. For him, although these initial contacts were fleeting moments, they were very important. In addition, Miró expressed admiration for the professional qualification of colleagues with whom he worked.

Michelangelo and Paul, representing the trajectory in which AOC levels remained elevated throughout the whole study period, also reported positive developments with regard to socialization and interpersonal relations. On the other hand, Gustav, Claude and Vincent, representing trajectories of individuals whose AOC levels decreased over time, reported having perceived resistance from the employees that received them in the organization. Despite this, Gustav and Claude cited positive aspects regarding interpersonal relations, the leader-member exchange relationship and the workplace in general. Vincent reviewed the first contact with management in a way diametrically opposed to Miró.

The findings here also support the role of AOC antecedent for organizational changes, organizational support, human resource practices and employee–organizational relations, as shown in previous studies (Eisenberger et al., 1986; Johnston, et al., 1993; Vandenberghe et al., 2004; Thompson et al., 2004). Paul reported that having changed the location of work affected his commitment positively, because this change was accompanied in his case with promotion and greater responsibility. On the other hand, Vincent reported that the organization changes concerning the applicable rules for the management of human resources made him to lose the confidence he had in the organization.

The illustrative cases of *Learning to Love* and *High Match* trajectories reported a generally positive assessment in relation to human resource practices and employee-organization relations. Miró and Michelangelo expressed satisfaction regarding the issue of flexibility of working hours and negotiation of holidays, as well as evaluation of their job performance. The other cases, representatives of the *Honeymoon Hangover* and *Learning to Hate* trajectories reported a generally negative assessment in relation to human resource practices and employee-organizational relations. Gustav and Vincent said that they were extremely disappointed with human resource practices and employee-organization relations.

The results of this research also provide support for the predictive power of the job scope and job challenge for AOC (Meyer et al., 1991; Colarelli, Dean & Konstans, 1987; Dunham, Grube & Castaneda, 1994). Individuals who said that they were challenged to use their knowledge and to develop were also the individuals whose AOC developed positively over time.

The analysis of the representatives cases of extreme trajectories, i.e. *Learning to Love* and *Learning to Hate*, offer insights about the overall Research Question,

concerning the relationship between the three constructs. Miró's levels of AOC, of the perceived fulfilment of the psychological contract and of job performance over the first three years of employment increased. Vincent's levels of AOC, on the other hand, of the perception of fulfilment of the obligations of the employer in the psychological contract and of job performance decreased. Note that, for Vincent, he fulfilled his obligations in psychological contract almost entirely. Moreover, we note that, except for Miró, the fulfilment of employee obligations seems to be less related to the AOC levels than the fulfilment of the employer obligations in the psychological contract. Both the quantitative as well as the qualitative results of this research suggest that a minimum level of fulfilment of employee obligations and job performance is maintained, regardless of levels of AOC, the fulfilment of employer obligations and the experiences after entry into the organization. At this point, the discussion of the second Research Question, about how the trajectories of organizational commitment are related to the job performance, is appropriate.

Analysis of the representative cases of *Honeymoon Hangover* trajectory might help us to understand why the findings on the relationship between AOC and job performance are inconclusive (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Meyer et al. 2002; Mowday et al., 1982). On the one hand, AOC levels decrease after entry into the organization. We interpret this phenomenon as a process of adjustment, during which the individual begins to better understand the organization, its strengths and weaknesses, and then the idealized image before entrance gives way to a closer picture of reality, which leads to adjusting the levels of AOC. Nevertheless, this same adjustment process appears to lead to an improvement in levels of job performance. We interpret this improvement as a period during which the individual learns to work in the organization. Because of this learning, levels of job performance increase. If a quantitative analysis was performed in

a group in which a similar phenomenon occurred, the relationship found between the two constructs would be non-significant or negative. In this case, the researchers would have difficulty in interpreting the reasons justifying a negative relationship between the two constructs, because the widespread assumption is that the relationship is positive, although the empirical support for this assumption is weak and not conclusive.

The results of this study lead us to question whether the relationship between AOC and organization-relevant outcomes would be linear, as assumed. In addition, other factors interact in that relationship, such as the different foci of commitment, the job itself, the team, the career, and the labor union (Bastos, 1994a). Perhaps, after reaching a certain level of AOC, it ceases to have any impact. Perhaps only the absence or very low levels of AOC have a negative impact on job performance.

The discussion of the results of the *Honeymoon Hangover* trajectory provides evidence that not all decreases in AOC levels are alarming for managers about job performance. Surveys generally seek to identify ways to increase AOC levels to the highest. A slight decrease in AOC levels might not be a problem, as the dramatical decreasing to the point at which the individual has no further commitment to the organization. Preventing organizational commitment levels progressively decreasing dramatically may be even more important than understanding the mechanisms for managing the growth of medium to high commitment levels.

This study highlights the importance of discussing what kind of job performance the organization is looking for. If the organization is satisfied with employees who just obey, do everything they are told to without question, without innovation, and without doing anything else, then nothing needs to be done beyond the granting of monies in exchange. With the reduction of psychological to purely transactional level contracts, the organization can expect the employee to perform no more than is strictly necessary.

Here, represented by the case of Vincent, it arises from low levels of AOC. The individual keeps the link to the organization, keeps working, he is entrenched (Rodrigues, 2009; Rodrigues & Bastos, 2010). This type of bond makes Vincent refer to the organization as a prison. Gustav's comments, referring to commitment itself as if he had a grudge contributes to the discussion that Fink (1992) proposes questioning the reason why so many managers settle for compliance rather than try to build commitment in their employees. "The problem is that when people do things because they are afraid of the consequences of not doing them, they do not really give their best" (Fink, 1992, p. 119).

5.7 Conclusion

The main goal of this study was to contribute to the understanding of the relationship between organizational commitment and the fulfilment of the psychological contract with job performance over time. Our results collaborate in the interpretation of how the obligations of the employer in the psychological contract, the negative post-entry experiences in the organization, breaches and violations in psychological contract affect AOC. In addition, the study offers insights for the interpretation of the relationship between AOC and job performance, suggesting that not all falls in AOC levels are alarming for managers.

The results of this research go beyond the numbers generated by the quantitative research, exploring how phenomena are related in light of the organizational actors' own perceptions. However, in addition to meeting the goal demonstrating how the fulfilment of the psychological contract affects AOC and job performance, this study provides insights for the research of each of the constructs involved, especially AOC. This study provides qualitative results that underlie the interpretation of factors such as

the leader-member exchange, interpersonal relations, organizational changes, organizational support, human resource practices, job scope and employee-organizational relations as antecedents of AOC. Contributions are particularly relevant to the context of public administration, with job security and limited performance-pay link.

Chapter 6: Highlights of findings, general discussion and conclusion

In this thesis, which is based on four different studies, we explore the theoretical micro-level of organizational behavior. More specifically, Study 1 explores the fulfilment of the psychological contract as one of the primary explanations for its changes over time. In turn, Study 2 examines the causes for changes in AOC levels. Our third study builds on the first and second studies and specifically assesses the relationship between the fulfilment of the psychological contract, AOC and job performance over time. In Study 4, a more micro-level perspective is used to explore this relationship in a qualitative survey. Our general discussion proceeds as follows. First, we describe the highlights of the studies included in this thesis and the main contributions to theory development. Then we discuss the broader managerial implications of the studies. We conclude considering the several limitations of our findings and how they are related to future research.

6.1 Contributions to theory development

6.1.1 Study 1

While previous studies have contributed significantly to advance research on psychological contract breaches, violations and consequences, the issue of psychological contract development and change has remained relatively unexamined. Study 1 contributes to the understanding of the situations in which change in the psychological contract is most likely to occur. By examining perceived employee obligations, the findings of Study 1 suggest that change in the psychological contract can be a critical index, which reveals how the individual alters his or her actions within or toward the organization. Study 1 is among the first studies to examine the interaction

between fulfilment of employer and employee obligations to explain change in the psychological contract over time. Study 1 adds to previous research (Coyle-Shapiro & Kessler, 2002; Dabos & Rousseau, 2004; De Vos et al., 2003; Lester et. al., 2007; Robinson et al., 1994; Tekleab et al., 2013; Thomas & Anderson, 1998) in the analysis of the interactive effects of employer and employee fulfilment obligations to explain change. The perceptions that the employee has of the mutual obligations arise not only from what the employer does for him or her, but also from the comparison with what s/he did for his/her employer together. The results of Study 1 show that the greatest changes in the psychological contract were more likely to occur when not only the employer fails to fulfil its obligations, but also when the employee does not deliver his/her part of the deal.

6.1.2 Study 2

Study 2 advances prior research by viewing commitment as a dynamic construct that changes over time. Study 2 shows, not only through its findings, but also by the extensive review of longitudinal studies, that organizational commitment tends to decrease with time, although this decrease may be moderated by age (Ng & Feldman, 2010). Relatively few studies have examined change in commitment as a latent variable (Bentein et al., 2005; Lance et al., 2000; Ng et al., 2010) and because of this, this study is among the first to ascertain the different ways in which individuals change their levels of commitment over time and the causes for this, using this approach. In Study 2 we found no significant differences among individuals with respect to the latent variable of change, as Lance et al., 2000 did. This finding suggests that individual characteristics do not affect the process of change as individuals did not change in different ways (the LC variance was not significant). The findings of Study 2 suggest that change in AOC

levels is more affected by post-entry experience than by personal experiences. The findings of Study 2 provide insights which require further study to understand commitment as a dynamic construct.

6.1.3 Study 3

Previous studies have contributed significantly to advance research on psychological contract, AOC and job performance separately, however, the issue of associations among them, and how these three constructs develop over time has remained relatively unexamined. Study 3 is among the first studies to test the association between fulfilment of the psychological contract, AOC and job performance empirically over time. Study 3 adds to previous research (Conway & Briner, 2002; McInnis et al., 2009) by ratifying the positive relationship between psychological contract fulfilment and AOC in a different cultural context. The results of Study 3 also add to previous research (Conway & Coyle-Shapiro, 2011; Turnley et al., 2003) by investigating how the variables of fulfilment of the psychological contract, considering both the obligations of the employer and the employee, explain job performance. Study 3 advances prior research by showing that job performance might be better predicted by a combination of variables such as fulfilment of psychological contract and AOC.

6.1.4 Study 4

The main goal of Study 4 was to contribute to the understanding of the relationship between organizational commitment, fulfilment of the psychological contract and job performance over time. The results of Study 4 collaborate in the interpretation of how a) the fulfilment of the obligations of the employer in the psychological contract b)

breaches and violations in psychological contract and c) the negative post-entry experiences in the organization affect AOC. Furthermore, it offers insights for the interpretation of the relationship between AOC and job performance, suggesting that not all falls in AOC levels are alarming signs for the management of job performance.

6.2 Managerial Implications

Taking into account that pre-employment experiences can be considered antecedents of the psychological contract and can therefore affect its development, the findings of Study 1 provides an interesting way to better understand how employees form their psychological contracts and the consequences that may result from the failure in communicating what is expected from the employer. The study 1 emphasizes the importance of including aspects of psychological contract in the selection process, on the assumption that the psychological contract should be managed. The management activities in order to establish possible trades prevent future problems and disappointments. The manager can expect the employee to change his/her perception of what obligations s/he has in relation to the organization depending on the level to which the organization fulfils its part of the deal.

A changing psychological contract is neither good nor bad in itself, but it reflects a process of adaptation. This change may have negative consequences for the organization if it induces breaches or violation in the psychological contract as a vast amount of research demonstrates (Robinson & Morrison, 2000; Turnley & Feldman, 1999). The main practical implication of the findings of Study 1 is that managers are advised not to expect employees to perceive their own obligations at a higher level if the obligations of the organization are not also being fulfilled at an equivalent level.

Studies 1, 2 and 4 highlight the importance of the first contact with the organization. This includes the initial experience in recruiting, the selection processes and the first socialization periods, providing newcomers with accurate information regarding their jobs in an attempt to avoid potential unmet pre-entry expectations and breaches in the psychological contract that are results of misunderstandings (Dean, Ferris & Konstans, 1988; Earl & Bright, 2007; Major et al., 1995; Meyer & Allen, 1988; Takeuchi & Takeuchi, 2009).

The results of Study 3 show a strong link between psychological contract fulfilment and AOC. This indicates the importance of psychological contract management and of the expectations created even before entering the organization. Given the results of the Study 2 and 4, the highlighted challenge for managers is to prevent AOC from decreasing drastically. Most important of all is to attempt to improve the quality of human resource practices, organizational support, the leader-member exchange relationship, and employee-organizational relations in a general way (Eisenberger et al., 1986; Epitropaki & Martin, 2005; Fry et al., 2005; Vandenberghe et al., 2004; Thompson et al., 2004). In this sense, organizations should try to avoid extremes, as the extremely high AOC levels that eventually lead to big disappointments.

The literature presumes that higher AOC levels are good, that they can lead to better job performances and lower levels of turnover, among other expected consequences of commitment (Riketta, 2008; Wright & Kehoe, 2009). However, the consequences of extremely high commitment – the overcommitted employee – may not be so positive (Mowday et al., 1982; Randall, 1987). Extremely committed employees might become dysfunctional in the workplace and may eventually generate a counterproductive climate of competition, annoying others, and this might also lead to great disappointment as such individuals can go from one extreme to another, from love

to hate. Some individuals entered with lower AOC levels, but in contrast their AOC levels decreased less over time. Perhaps the group with the Learning to Love trajectory was more realistic about the organization, had more feasible expectations and this affected their trajectory. The higher the expectations, the greater the chance they will not be met. Therefore, avoid creating false hopes during the selection stages is of crucial importance. Once employees are hired and during the early socialization process, organizations should strive to get to know the employees, fulfil their promises, and therefore try to maintain their AOC levels.

The results of the study 3 provide insights that may be useful for the practice of job performance management in organizations. We need to consider whether the criteria evaluated are relevant for the achievement of organizational goals. For example, in the case of the job performance management system of the organization studied, the criteria for assiduity and discipline carry the same weight as criteria such as productivity and initiative. The suitability of this system depends on an assessment of the importance of each criterion for improving organizational performance. Job performance evaluation should focus on criteria that are relevant and which are able to provide some differentiation between individuals. To do this, the organization should first identify the relevant performance behaviors which give rise to better organizational performance. Eliminating or at least assigning different weights to irrelevant criteria is recommended. Second, the organization should try to find mechanisms to favor such positive behaviors. Thirdly, these behaviors should be recognized and valued so that they are stimulated. Finally, it is important to keep lines of communication open so that in cases of dissatisfaction, individuals can communicate rather than simply leave the organization or passively wait for conditions to improve. It is essential that individuals

perceive themselves as able to communicate and seek better conditions to achieve high job performance.

The findings of Studies 2, 3 and 4 suggest that in a context in which employees have job security and a limited pay-performance link, the organization runs the risk of keeping uncommitted individuals and bad performers. The organization also runs the risk of keeping individuals highly committed to the organization, but who do not perform well because of a lack of willingness, energy or competence. There is a lack of knowledge about how to address cases of low organizational commitment (Morrow, 2011), and low job performances in the public sector.

In private sector organizations, the most likely solution would be the firing of the individual or his/her voluntary departure. However, in the Brazilian public sector, there is the real possibility of completely unattached individuals even with unacceptable levels of job performance remaining in office. The results of Study 4 indicate that these individuals become a nuisance provoking the perception of inequity among colleagues, as seen in the comments of Paul, Claude and Vincent.

In Brazil, dismissal for poor job performance involves an administrative process in which the employee has the right to legal defense. While it is essential that the employee continues to be protected against the whims of managers, on the other hand public managers should have a structured legal support system to act in cases of undoubted poor job performance. By being aware of the effects that career advancement has on employees' organizational commitment as an instrument of recognition, Studies 2 and 4 suggest that the organization should communicate clearly how their decisions on this issue are made (Meyer & Allen, 1997). There is a need for a legal instrument to manage job performance effectively able to generate consequences both for recognition and for correction.

6.3 Limitations

Despite the suitability of a longitudinal research design to investigate dynamic constructs, there are some limitations related to this design, such as the selection and mortality of subjects and the possibility of bias caused by the knowledge of the questionnaire afforded by the background surveys. The interval between collections may not have been ideal to capture the process of adaptation and change. Ideally, the collection should have been performed with a shorter interval (e.g. 6 months), and over a longer period.

The characteristics of the research sample, from only one organization in the Brazilian public administration with its specific cultural characteristics, composed of highly educated and relatively young newcomers limits the possibility of generalizing the findings. Research with a wider age range, different levels of education, a more balanced gender composition, different occupational settings and different cultures are needed. The development of the constructs at mid- and late career stages should also be addressed. Self-reported measures might cause socially desirable responses, when measuring employees' evaluations of their own obligations and fulfilment, and AOC.

Work experience variables in Study 2 provided very limited information and therefore the results related to them are only suggestive. In this regard, it must be said that the study of the causes for changes in AOC levels seems to be more complex than initially scaled during this study, because the dependent (i.e. change) and independent variables (i.e. predictors of change) are both dynamic. For example, in order to investigate the effects of organizational climate on AOC change, it would have been necessary to measure this variable over time as well. Ng et al. (2010) investigated the relationships among psychological contract breaches and organizational commitment in

this way. Information that is more complete is needed so that relationships to predict change in commitment levels can be adequately investigated.

As regards job performance, the appraisal process is highly subjective and is extremely vulnerable to biases as discussed previously. Therefore it cannot be assumed that the greater the job performance, the greater the job performance evaluation. In Study 4 we stated that inferring characteristics of the population from the case studies was not an objective of this research. The cases were chosen for their relevant potential to aid in the interpretation of the phenomena under investigation. Therefore, the findings reported in Study 4 are not transferable to other individuals and contexts. In addition to the limitations imposed by the method adopted, it is necessary to note that the studied discourses were self-reported, i.e. we worked with the perception of a very limited number of individuals who could be exaggerating in reporting some facts or reported some aspects in an inaccurate way.

6.4 Suggestions for Future Research

Further research is needed to validate the reported findings within a broader population. The ideal way to have avoided common-method bias would have been if someone representing the organization could have evaluated the employees' side in psychological contract and employees' AOC. This is further complicated by who would represent the employer side? Future research should address this issue. Moreover, future studies should assess other factors, besides fulfilment, which contribute to change in the psychological contract, from changes in personal circumstances (e.g. having a child, loss of a close relative) to changes in the department, the work group or of supervisor and individual factors such as personality, values, proactive behavior, and self-efficacy beliefs.

Further studies should also focus on other types of commitment and consider other measures for job performance. Other antecedents and consequents that affect commitment levels could be assessed and the investigation be designed in such a way as to capture changes in antecedent variables and verify the effect of this change on change of commitment levels over time. Job performance should be investigated as a product of commitment not only to the organization. It may be that high AOC alone does not ensure high job performance, because other conditions can sustain job performance and they come from a greater general commitment and depends on a number of other factors.

Would highly committed people be well adjusted to the task? Are the most committed people inserted into groups that value discipline, punctuality, or other performance criteria? Would career commitment be a better predictor for the job performance of these individuals? Alternatively, maybe commitment is not enough to account for a good job performance, which also depends on other factors such as energy, disposition, competences, and organizational support. In this case, the suggestion is that future research works with models that combine various variables in order to obtain a higher degree of explanation for job performance.

It also remains to be investigated whether the AOC of individuals stabilizes over time or keeps changing and, in this case, the reasons for this. This warrants further longitudinal research. Another point which remains to be seen is whether there is a limit to which AOC may have some influence on job performance as even in the case where there is no AOC a minimum level of job performance was maintained (Study 4). Would the relationship between AOC and organization-relevant outcomes be linear, as assumed? Further research is needed to clarify the relationship between the three constructs, AOC, psychological contract and job performance.

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8. Appendices

Appendix A – Scales of Affective Organizational Commitment and Psychological

Contract (Portuguese Version)

Instrumento de Contrato Psicológico – Obrigações do Empregador

Na primeira coluna, avalie o que você acredita que [a organização] tenha de obrigação em relação a você. Quanto mais perto de 1, mais você discorda que aquela seja uma obrigação, quanto mais perto de 5, mais você concorda.

Na segunda coluna, avalie o quanto você acredita que [a organização] tenha cumprido das obrigações dela em relação a você. Quanto mais perto de 1, menor o cumprimento da obrigação, quanto mais perto de 5, maior o cumprimento.

	Acredito que seja uma obrigação [da organização]...					[A organização] cumpriu as obrigações dela para comigo?				
	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
me oferecer um trabalho que requeira originalidade e criatividade	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
me permitir ser eu mesmo dentro [da organização]*	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
reconhecer a importância do que faço	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
considerar não só o resultado final, mas também o meu esforço pessoal*	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
levar em conta minhas opiniões**	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
me dar autonomia para realizar meu trabalho**	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
colocar os servidores em locais compatíveis com suas características profissionais	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
oferecer um ambiente de cooperação entre os colegas de trabalho	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
não subutilizar minha capacidade de trabalho	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
me oferecer um trabalho intelectualmente estimulante**	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5

*Itens de Sels et al. (2004), traduzido para o português e adaptado para o Brasil por Rios (2007). ** Itens de Kickul et al. (2002) que foram traduzidos e adaptados para o Brasil para esta pesquisa.

Instrumento de Contrato Psicológico – Obrigações do Empregado

Na primeira coluna, avalie o que você acredita ter de obrigações em relação [à organização]. Quanto mais perto de 1, mais você discorda que aquela seja uma obrigação, quanto mais perto de 5, mais você concorda.

Na segunda coluna, avalie o quanto você acredita que você tenha cumprido as obrigações que você possui em relação [à organização]. Quanto mais perto de 1, menor o cumprimento da obrigação, quanto mais perto de 5, maior o cumprimento.

	Acredito que seja minha obrigação...					Eu cumpri as minhas obrigações para com a organização?				
	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
trazer ideias próprias e criatividade para melhoria das atividades*	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
apresentar um volume de trabalho adequado, levando-se em conta as condições e complexidade de minhas atividades	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
querer me desenvolver [na organização]*	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
me esforçar no cumprimento dos objetivos pré-estabelecidos	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
me ajustar facilmente às mudanças na situação do trabalho*	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
estabelecer com clareza o que é importante para mim no meu trabalho*	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
concluir os trabalhos dentro do prazo determinado	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
desenvolver as minhas atividades com a qualidade requerida	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
investir tempo e energia [na organização]*	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
lidar bem com os imprevistos nas situações de trabalho*	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5

*Itens de Sels et al. (2004), traduzido para o português e adaptado para o Brasil por Rios (2007).

Comprometimento Organizacional Afetivo

Avalie o quanto você concorda com a ideia apresentada. Quanto mais perto de 1, maior é a discordância; quanto mais perto de 5, maior é a concordância.

[A organização] realmente inspira o melhor em mim para meu progresso no desempenho do trabalho.*	1	2	3	4	5
Sinto os objetivos [da organização] como se fossem os meus.**	1	2	3	4	5
Eu acho que os meus valores são muito similares aos valores defendidos [pela organização].*	1	2	3	4	5
Conversando com amigos, eu sempre me refiro [à organização] como uma grande instituição para a qual é ótimo trabalhar.*	1	2	3	4	5
[A organização] tem um imenso significado pessoal para mim.**	1	2	3	4	5
Eu me sinto orgulhoso dizendo às pessoas que sou parte [da organização].*	1	2	3	4	5
Sinto que existe uma forte ligação afetiva entre mim e [a organização].**	1	2	3	4	5

Notas. *Itens de Mowday et al., 1979, traduzido para o português e adaptado para o Brasil por Borges-Andrade et al. (1989). **Itens de Meyer et al. (1993), traduzido para o português e adaptado para o Brasil por Medeiros e Enders (1998).

Appendix B – Scales of Affective Organizational Commitment and Psychological

Contract (English Version)

Psychological Contract Instrument – Employer Obligations

The following statements are about the obligations of your employer towards you. In the first column, please indicate for each statement to which extent you agree, on a scale from 1 to 5, the closer to 1, the greater the disagreement, the closer to 5, the higher the agreement.

In the second column, please rate how much you believe that your employer has fulfilled the obligations towards you. The closer to 1, the lower the fulfilment of the obligation, the closer to 5, the higher the fulfilment.

	I believe my employer has the obligation to...					How well does my employer fulfil its obligations to me?				
	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
offer me a job that requires originality and creativity	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
allow me to be myself within this firm*	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
recognize the importance of what I do	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
consider not only the end result, but also my personal effort*	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
take into account my opinions**	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
provide autonomy to do my job**	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
put employees in locations consistent with their professional features	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
provide an environment of cooperation among coworkers	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
do not underestimate my capacity to work	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
offer me an intellectually stimulating work**	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5

Notes. *Items from Sels et al. (2004), translated to Portuguese and adapted for Brazil by Rios (2007).** Items from Kickul et al. (2002) that we adapted for Brazil.

Psychological Contract Instrument – Employee Obligations

The following statements are about your obligations towards your employer. In the first column, please indicate for each statement to which extent you agree, on a scale from 1 to 5, the closer to 1, the greater the disagreement, the closer to 5, the higher the agreement.

In the second column, rate how much you believe you have fulfilled your obligations towards your employer. The closer to 1, the lower the fulfilment of the obligation, the closer to 5, the higher the fulfilment.

	I believe I have the obligation to...					How well do I fulfil my obligations to my employer?				
	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
bring own ideas and creativity into this firm*	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
present a workload appropriate, taking into account the conditions and complexity of my activities	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
want to develop myself in this firm*	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
strive to fulfil the goals pre-established	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
adjust easily to changes in my work situation*	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
clearly state what is important to me in my work*	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
complete the work within the specified	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
develop my activities with the required quality	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
invest time and energy in this firm*	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
deal with unpredictable events in my work situation*	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5

*Items from Sels et al. (2004), translated to Portuguese and adapted for Brazil by Rios (2007).

Affective Organizational Commitment

Please rate how much you agree with following statements. The closer to 1, the greater the disagreement, the closer to 5, the higher the agreement.

This organization really inspires the very best in me in the way of job performance.*	1	2	3	4	5
I really feel as if this organization's problems are my own.**	1	2	3	4	5
I find that my values and the organization's values are very similar.*	1	2	3	4	5
I talk up this organization to my friends as a great organization to work for.*	1	2	3	4	5
This organization has a great deal of personal meaning for me.**	1	2	3	4	5
I am proud to tell others that I am part of this organization.*	1	2	3	4	5
I feel emotionally attached to this organization**	1	2	3	4	5

Notes.*Items from Mowday et al., 1979, translated to Portuguese and adapted for Brazil by Borges-Andrade et al. (1989). **Items from Meyer et al. (1993), translated to Portuguese and adapted for Brazil by Medeiros and Enders (1998).

Appendix C – Exploratory principal component analysis and psychometric properties of the Measures

Table 8.1 Psychological Contract Instrument – Employer Obligations

Items	Time 1 (N=193)			Time 2 (N=193)			Time 3 (N=193)		
	Factor loadings	h ²	Item-total	Factor loadings	h ²	Item-total	Factor loadings	h ²	Item-total
me oferecer um trabalho que requeira originalidade e criatividade	.547	.299	.443	.600	.360	.511	.665	.443	.574
me permitir ser eu mesmo dentro [da organização]*	.657	.432	.562	.651	.423	.560	.720	.518	.634
reconhecer a importância do que faço	.753	.567	.663	.773	.598	.673	.708	.502	.609
considerar não só o resultado final, mas também o meu esforço pessoal*	.609	.371	.502	.691	.478	.573	.726	.527	.621
levar em conta minhas opiniões**	.723	.523	.621	.707	.500	.588	.761	.579	.674
me dar autonomia para realizar meu trabalho**	.635	.403	.535	.618	.381	.492	.704	.496	.613
oferecer um ambiente de cooperação entre os colegas de trabalho	.711	.506	.600	.621	.386	.488	.600	.359	.492
colocar os servidores em locais compatíveis com suas características profissionais	.545	.298	.451	.325	.105	.262	.484	.234	.398
não subutilizar minha capacidade de trabalho	.640	.409	.516	.545	.297	.416	.537	.288	.441
me oferecer um trabalho intelectualmente estimulante**	.749	.561	.656	.705	.497	.598	.749	.561	.662
KMO - Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin	.885			.817			.872		
Eigenvalues	4.368			4.026			4.507		
Explained variance (%)	43.67			40.26			45.07		

Notes. The factor loadings, communalities and correlations item-total are presented. Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Items are in Portuguese, the way they were applied. *Items from Sels et al. (2004), translated to Portuguese and adapted for Brazil by Rios (2007). ** Items from Kickul et al. (2002) that we adapted for Brazil.

Table 8.2 Psychological Contract Instrument – Fulfilment of Employer Obligations

Items	Time 2 (N=193)			Time 3 (N=193)		
	Factor loadings	h ²	Item-total	Factor loadings	h ²	Item-total
me oferecer um trabalho que requeira originalidade e criatividade	.706	.498	.578	.707	.500	.604
me permitir ser eu mesmo dentro [da organização]*	.628	.394	.529	.659	.435	.568
reconhecer a importância do que faço	.704	.496	.596	.731	.535	.642
considerar não só o resultado final, mas também o meu esforço pessoal*	.519	.269	.422	.627	.393	.531
levar em conta minhas opiniões**	.725	.525	.633	.739	.547	.644
me dar autonomia para realizar meu trabalho**	.531	.282	.429	.719	.517	.628
oferecer um ambiente de cooperação entre os colegas de trabalho	.369	.136	.303	.454	.206	.368
colocar os servidores em locais compatíveis com suas características profissionais	.588	.345	.452	.594	.353	.493
não subutilizar minha capacidade de trabalho	.722	.521	.591	.721	.520	.633
me oferecer um trabalho intelectualmente estimulante**	.779	.607	.656	.736	.541	.644
KMO - Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin	.844			.853		
Eigenvalues	4.073			4.547		
Explained variance (%)	40.73			45.47		

Notes. The factor loadings, communalities and correlations item-total are presented. Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Items are in Portuguese, the way they were applied. *Items from Sels et al. (2004), translated to Portuguese and adapted for Brazil by Rios (2007). ** Items from Kickul et al. (2002) that we adapted for Brazil.

Table 8.3 Psychological Contract Instrument – Employee Obligations

Items	Time 1 (N=193)			Time 2 (N=193)			Time 3 (N=193)		
	Factor loadings	h ²	Item-total	Factor loadings	h ²	Item-total	Factor loadings	h ²	Item-total
trazer idéias próprias e criatividade para melhoria das atividades*	.642	.413	.536	.690	.476	.565	.687	.472	.604
apresentar um volume de trabalho adequado, levando-se em conta as condições e complexidade de minhas atividades	.623	.388	.482	.577	.332	.415	.715	.512	.606
querer me desenvolver [na organização]*	.633	.401	.503	.518	.268	.422	.621	.386	.536
me esforçar no cumprimento dos objetivos pré-estabelecidos	.532	.283	.411	.630	.397	.462	.611	.373	.481
me ajustar facilmente às mudanças na situação do trabalho*	.673	.453	.587	.683	.466	.570	.665	.442	.586
estabelecer com clareza o que é importante para mim no meu trabalho*	.586	.344	.500	.608	.369	.503	.621	.385	.537
concluir os trabalhos dentro do prazo determinado	.517	.268	.369	.589	.347	.432	.608	.370	.481
desenvolver as minhas atividades com a qualidade requerida	.581	.338	.440	.530	.281	.386	.659	.435	.536
investir tempo e energia [na organização]*	.662	.439	.516	.542	.294	.447	.672	.452	.563
lidar bem com os imprevistos nas situações de trabalho*	.660	.436	.536	.583	.340	.469	.736	.541	.641
KMO - Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin	.832			.828			.873		
Eigenvalues	3.761			3.570			4.368		
Explained variance (%)	37.61			35.70			43.68		

Notes. The factor loadings, communalities and correlations item-total are presented. Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Items are in Portuguese, the way they were applied. *Items from Sels et al. (2004), translated to Portuguese and adapted for Brazil by Rios (2007).

Table 8.4 Psychological Contract Instrument – Fulfilment of Employee Obligations

Items	Time 2 (N=193)			Time 3 (N=193)		
	Factor loadings	h ²	Item-total	Factor loadings	h ²	Item-total
trazer idéias próprias e criatividade para melhoria das atividades*	.601	.362	.474	.659	.434	.524
apresentar um volume de trabalho adequado, levando-se em conta as condições e complexidade de minhas atividades	.615	.378	.456	.667	.445	.533
querer me desenvolver [na organização]*	.460	.211	.348	.612	.375	.488
me esforçar no cumprimento dos objetivos pré-estabelecidos	.589	.347	.432	.653	.427	.532
me ajustar facilmente às mudanças na situação do trabalho*	.436	.190	.311	.534	.285	.418
estabelecer com clareza o que é importante para mim no meu trabalho*	.411	.169	.310	.458	.210	.351
concluir os trabalhos dentro do prazo determinado	.638	.407	.474	.410	.168	.304
desenvolver as minhas atividades com a qualidade requerida	.541	.292	.372	.686	.470	.555
investir tempo e energia [na organização]*	.648	.420	.483	.669	.447	.522
lidar bem com os imprevistos nas situações de trabalho*	.613	.375	.466	.649	.421	.543
KMO - Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin	.782			.817		
Eigenvalues	3.152			3.681		
Explained variance (%)	31.52			36.81		

Notes. The factor loadings, communalities and correlations item-total are presented. Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Items are in Portuguese, the way they were applied. *Items from Sels et al. (2004), translated to Portuguese and adapted for Brazil by Rios (2007).

Table 8.5 Affective Organizational Commitment Instrument

Items	Time 1 (N=194)			Time 2 (N=194)			Time 3 (N=194)		
	Factor loadings	h ²	Item-total	Factor loadings	h ²	Item-total	Factor loadings	h ²	Item-total
[A organização] realmente inspira o melhor em mim para meu progresso no desempenho do trabalho.*	.767	.588	.664	.630	.397	.512	.708	.502	.601
Sinto os objetivos [da organização] como se fossem os meus.**	.736	.541	.639	.692	.479	.585	.730	.534	.633
Eu acho que os meus valores são muito similares aos valores defendidos [pela organização].*	.664	.441	.556	.624	.390	.519	.647	.418	.540
Conversando com amigos, eu sempre me refiro [à organização] como uma grande instituição para a qual é ótimo trabalhar.*	.807	.651	.714	.797	.636	.695	.793	.629	.694
[A organização] tem um imenso significado pessoal para mim.**	.773	.597	.676	.826	.682	.720	.827	.683	.742
Eu me sinto orgulhoso dizendo às pessoas que sou parte [da organização].*	.795	.633	.699	.769	.591	.655	.828	.686	.742
Sinto que existe uma forte ligação afetiva entre mim e [a organização].**	.799	.638	.711	.808	.652	.698	.797	.635	.705
KMO - Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin	.861			.820			.842		
Eigenvalues	4.089			3.826			4.087		
Explained variance (%)	58.419			54.659			58.389		

Notes. The factor loadings, communalities and correlations item-total are presented. Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Items are in Portuguese, the way they were applied.*Items from Mowday et al., 1979, translated to Portuguese and adapted for Brazil by Borges-Andrade et al. (1989). **Items from Meyer et al. (1993), translated to Portuguese and adapted for Brazil by Medeiros and Enders (1998).

Table 8.6 Job Performance Measure

Criteria	Time 2 (N=202)			Time 4 (N=202)		
	Factor loadings	h ²	Item-total	Factor loadings	h ²	Item-total
Assiduidade: Presença ativa, regular e sistemática no local de trabalho, dentro do horário estabelecido.	.943	.890	.911	.910	.829	.860
Disciplina: Observância das normas legais e regulamentares e das orientações expedidas pelas autoridades competentes, respeito à hierarquia estabelecida e manutenção de padrão ético compatível com os valores da instituição.	.941	.886	.907	.913	.834	.864
Iniciativa: Habilidade para visualizar situações e apresentar pró ativamente alternativas, sugestões, ideias, ou adotar providências voltadas para a melhoria da qualidade do serviço.	.898	.806	.842	.905	.819	.849
Produtividade: Volume e qualidade de trabalho produzido num dado intervalo de tempo, levando em conta sua natureza e complexidade e as condições de sua realização.	.926	.857	.883	.898	.807	.837
Responsabilidade: Compromisso permanente como execução do trabalho, zelando pelas informações e pelos valores envolvidos no desempenho de suas atividades.	.977	.954	.963	.965	.931	.944
KMO - Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin	.860			.849		
Eigenvalues	4.393			4.219		
Explained variance (%)	87.86%			84.38%		

Notes. The factor loadings, communalities and correlations item-total are presented. Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Criteria are in Portuguese, the way they were applied.

Appendix D – Confirmatory Factor Analysis of the Measures

Table 8.7 Model Fit Summary

Scales	χ^2	DF	χ^2 / DF	GFI	NFI	CFI	RMR
ER (t1)	63.577	34	1.87	.941	.898	.949	.026
ER (t2)	75.052	30	2.50	.932	.880	.922	.034
ER (t3)	72.057	32	2.25	.931	.899	.940	.034
ERF (t2)	78.090	31	2.52	.919	.874	.918	.051
ERF (t3)	78.939	32	2.47	.926	.892	.932	.036
EE (t1)	61.454	33	1.86	.939	.872	.934	.012
EE (t2)	56.660	33	1.72	.947	.870	.939	.017
EE (t3)	82.637	33	2.50	.919	.873	.918	.030
EEF (t2)	53.469	33	1.62	.948	.845	.932	.026
EEF (t3)	54.358	33	1.65	.948	.884	.950	.020
AOC (t1)	29.776	12	2.48	.957	.955	.972	.021
AOC (t2)	34.664	12	2.89	.953	.944	.962	.039
AOC (t3)	27.332	10	2.73	.963	.961	.975	.036
JP (t2)	3.559	2	1.78	.993	.998	.999	.001
JP (t4)	7.317	2	3.66	.986	.994	.995	.003

Notes. Maximum Likelihood Estimation Method. ER= Employer Obligations; EE= Employee Obligations; ERF= Employer Obligations Fulfilment; EEF= Employee Obligations Fulfilment; AOC= Affective Organizational Commitment; JP= Job Performance. ‘t’ before a number indicates ‘Time’ (e.g., t1 = Time 1). Time 2 of AOC, ERF and EEF in these appendices is Time 1 in Study 3. χ^2 = Chi-square; DF= degrees of freedom; GFI= goodness-of-fit index; NFI= normed fit index; CFI= Comparative Fit Index; RMR= Root-mean-square residual.

Appendix E – Segments of interviews originally in Portuguese

The segments of interviews are in the order they were mentioned.

“Eu entro com expectativas bem altas e espero fazer uma carreira bem interessante, servindo a nação da melhor forma possível, e, mesmo sabendo que as atribuições [da organização] são complexas, são muito complexas, eu estou disposto realmente a estudar, me dedicar e ser um excelente servidor.” (Vincent, 2010, 1).

“Eu não costumo muito ser muito do tipo que veste a camisa e sai vendendo a organização, eu não sou desse perfil, mas eu também não sou do contrário, que deixa de defender quando tem que defender. (...) Quando questionado, sim, costumo defender e sinto orgulho. (...) Eu aceitei a posição que eu me encontro e assim eu estou trabalhando lá tentando oferecer o que melhor posso, no local onde eu me encontro atualmente.” (Miró, 2013, 1).

“Eu procuro na medida do possível em vez de reclamar, tentar ver se dá para melhorar ou não dá. Eu acho que isso ajuda a você a ser mais comprometido, se você tem um olhar não de reclamar, mas um olhar de tentar entender e melhorar, você tenta se comprometer para melhorar aquilo.” (Paul, 2013, 1)

“A primeira oportunidade que eu tiver que sair, eu saio, é meio que assim, é como se eu tivesse guardando um rancor, não que eu esteja manifestando isso, diariamente, mas a primeira oportunidade que eu tiver, eu saio, entendeu? Eu me comprometo diariamente, não me peça comprometimento de anos, porque isso eu não posso prometer, entendeu?” (Gustav, 2013, 1).

“Eu tenho um ódio profundo, eu tenho ojeriza profunda de trabalhar aqui, odeio trabalhar aqui. (...) Eu só trabalho aqui porque não tenho outro lugar para ir, infelizmente. Eu quero sair o mais rápido possível desse lugar, esse lugar me faz mal. Cair fora de vez e nunca mais pisar aqui. (...) Estou preso... Estou preso ao salário. Lá fora a situação tá pior, a gente vê a crise lá fora, a iniciativa privada, nem pensar. Vocês não podem me mandar embora, vocês vão aturar minha cara e eu vou aturar a cara de vocês.” (Vincent, 2013, 1).

“A minha expectativa é que fosse um pouco melhor, mas eu acho que está mais ou menos dentro disso daí. Algumas coisas eu percebi que são melhores, e outras eu percebi que nisso aqui eu acho que tem um caminho muito burocrático pra conseguir uma determinada coisa que poderia ser mais simples. Mas eu percebo isso como características da própria estrutura [da organização], e então não vejo isso como defeito, eu acho que está na média.” (Miró, 2011, 1)

“A gestão tentou manter um contato bem próximo, nesse aspecto eu achei muito positivo. Ele criou um espaço na agenda dele pra conversar com os novos servidores, entender a percepção que a gente tinha pela chegada [à organização], isso foi uma ou duas vezes mas eu achei que foi muito importante, apesar de serem momentos rápidos.” (Miró, 2011, 2)

“Nesse ponto está bem evoluído, até mais do que eu imaginei que eu fosse encontrar. Fica um ambiente mais focado em produtividade e não em hora sentada na cadeira, então fica um negócio bem mais interessante.” (Michelangelo, 2013, 1)

“Eu vim com a cabeça muito aberta, eu fiquei meio assim [com a alocação], mas aí eu disse vamos ver qual é. Alguns [colegas] ficaram muito decepcionados, mas eu não tive essa decepção, e eu vim realmente pra fazer a leitura.” (Paul, 2013, 2)

“Alguns valores da chefia com relação à Gestão de Pessoas foram uma decepção pra mim. Isso me decepcionou bastante, aliás. Não foi uma coisinha pontual que eu vi, não. Foram tantas coisas, que eu falei: gente, como assim? Estou num lugar em que os valores, teoricamente, são totalmente contrários à prática, então, o que eu estou fazendo aqui? É muito contra o que eu penso...” (Gustav, 2013, 2)

“A grande dificuldade é que algumas pessoas mais antigas têm uma resistência com os mais novos. Sentem como se a gente estivesse querendo tomar o espaço deles, e eu acho que tem espaço para todo mundo. Essa é a grande dificuldade que eu vejo no convívio.” (Claude, 2013, 1)

“Se eu trabalhar mais, eu vou ganhar exatamente o mesmo salário que o cara que não faz exatamente nada o dia inteiro e fica só na internet e no telefone. Para quê que eu vou me dedicar? Eu não sou otário, eu não sou bobo.” (Vincent, 2013, 2)

“No primeiro dia do trabalho o diretor da minha área falou ‘se o chefe pedir pra você carimbar, você carimba bem feito porque se você mostrar que você carimba muito bem, logo, logo o chefe vai te dar uma tarefa intelectualmente mais difícil pra você fazer’. É uma visão completamente distorcida.” (Vincent, 2013, 3)

“A gente tinha um acordo, e esse acordo foi para o ralo. As mudanças das regras do jogo acontecem numa velocidade tão grande, que aquilo que você tinha combinado no passado não vale mais no futuro, em um horizonte de tempo bastante próximo e curto...” (Vincent, 2013, 4)

“É uma percepção que eu tenho, você tem um grupo que está muito tranquilo, que está satisfeito, não quer assumir responsabilidade, mas tem o outro que é ambicioso, que busca cargos, enfim, que busca crescer na organização... É meio que uma roda viva... Você vê uma pessoa que era coordenador de um departamento e vai bater em outro... E você vê que é porque o amigo puxou, e aí ele vai fazer uma função que não tem nada a ver com o perfil dele...” (Paul, 2013, 3)

“Meu perfil não é de reclamar muito das coisas. Se esse trabalho precisa ser feito e é pra eu fazer, eu vou fazer. Se esse é o trabalho que me deram, eu vou fazê-lo da melhor forma possível, e é assim que eu tenho trabalhado. Mas não eram as atividades que eu esperava.” (Claude, 2013, 2)

“Eu vejo que tem muita gente ali que não trabalha e que atrapalham os demais. Ao meu lado tem uma pessoa assim, nitidamente, ela não faz absolutamente nada e ela só atrapalha a mim e a minha equipe. O chefe dela tá cansado de saber, nós já conversamos com ele, nós já pedimos providências e nada, não se faz nada. A resposta é, ‘já vai se aposentar, gente, não vamos mexer nisso’. Como é que se admite que uma pessoa que não quer fazer nada atrapalhe outras pessoas que estão lá?” (Gustav, 2013, 3)

“Trazer novas ideias? Sou idiota de trazer novas ideias? O que eu vou ganhar com isso?

Nada! Eu não quero saber, não. Eu ainda faço o que me mandam porque eu não sou insubordinado, eu sou profissional, e tenho ética ainda.” (Vincent, 2013, 5)

Appendix F – Expanded abstract in Portuguese / Resumo expandido em português

Comprometimento organizacional, contrato psicológico e desempenho no trabalho são construtos que se inserem no campo da disciplina de Comportamento Organizacional, um campo que possui um elevado potencial de contribuição para a melhoria dos processos de gestão, tanto na formulação de políticas quanto no desenvolvimento de práticas.

Os objetivos desta tese são analisar quantitativa e qualitativamente o desenvolvimento do contrato psicológico e do comprometimento organizacional de ingressantes a uma organização pública ao longo do tempo e testar um modelo explicativo das relações entre esses dois construtos e o desempenho no trabalho.

A pesquisa foi realizada ao longo de um período de três anos com servidores públicos recém-admitidos por meio de concurso a um órgão público brasileiro. Foram realizadas três coletas, sendo a primeira antes do ingresso à organização, a segunda após um ano de trabalho e a terceira após três anos de trabalho. A investigação da natureza processual desses construtos objetivou compreender as mudanças ocorridas ao longo do tempo e as possíveis razões para essas mudanças.

É notória a complexidade e a dificuldade para se realizar a integração de diferentes dimensões da gestão, principalmente em ambientes organizacionais muito dinâmicos, que contemplem a execução de diversos projetos promotores de mudanças organizacionais.

A principal questão explorada e discutida nesta tese objetiva a evolução nas práticas de gestão do contrato psicológico e do comprometimento organizacional, com vistas à melhoria na gestão do desempenho do servidor público no trabalho e que conseqüentemente venha a se refletir em melhoria no desempenho da organização.

A tese oferece uma reflexão no sentido de auxiliar a ligação entre as ações de desenvolvimento em nível micro (do indivíduo, gestor ou subordinado) ao macro, de maneira que as melhorias e avanços efetuados em um nível conduzam a avanços maiores em termos organizacionais.

A escassez de estudos que colaborem para a compreensão do desenvolvimento tanto do contrato psicológico, quanto do comprometimento organizacional ao longo do tempo apontam para uma importante lacuna na pesquisa desses conceitos e constitui um indicador do potencial de contribuição que essa tese possui.

Modelagem de curva de crescimento latente foi uma das técnicas estatísticas utilizada para verificar as mudanças, tanto individuais quanto de grupo, por meio do uso de taxas de mudança e interceptos.

Os resultados obtidos para a pesquisa desenvolvida foram apresentados por meio de quatro estudos. O primeiro estudo da tese examinou as mudanças no contrato psicológico de funcionários recém-admitidos ao longo dos três primeiros anos de trabalho na organização. Com base na abordagem do contrato psicológico como um construto dinâmico, a expectativa era que o mesmo seria adaptado em função das experiências vivenciadas após o ingresso.

Os resultados da modelagem de curva de crescimento latente mostraram que a intensidade com que as obrigações do empregador e do próprio empregado eram percebidas diminuiu ao longo do tempo a uma taxa de mudança de -0.112 ao ano para as obrigações do empregador e de -0.106 ao ano para as obrigações do empregado no contrato psicológico.

Para investigar a mudança de modo mais detalhado, foram realizados testes t de amostras pareadas para comparar as médias de cada item ao longo do tempo. Foi

considerado que a análise de cada item poderia trazer informações relevantes para o objetivo de gestão do contrato psicológico.

Entre as obrigações do empregador no contrato psicológico que apresentaram diferenças significativas entre o Tempo 1 e 2, somente uma aumentou, todas as outras decresceram na intensidade com que eram percebidas. O item se referia à autonomia para fazer o trabalho.

Entre as obrigações do empregado no contrato psicológico, também somente um item apresentou diferença crescente significativa: “Acredito que seja minha obrigação me ajustar facilmente às mudanças na situação do trabalho”. Todos os outros itens decresceram significativamente na intensidade com que eram percebidos ao longo do primeiro ano de trabalho.

Da comparação entre os Tempos 2 e 3, constatou-se que todas as obrigações, tanto do empregador, quanto do empregado, decresceram na intensidade com que eram percebidas.

Constatada a mudança, análises de regressão múltipla hierárquica para as obrigações do empregador e dos empregados foram realizadas, controlando pelo valor das mesmas obrigações na coleta anterior. Em seguida, a mudança nas obrigações percebidas foi verificada em função da percepção de cumprimento das mesmas. Foram realizadas análises de regressão para a variável calculada de Mudança, avaliada indiretamente por meio da comparação das obrigações entre os momentos.

Ao examinar a percepção que os empregados tinham a respeito das próprias obrigações e das obrigações da organização no contrato psicológico, os resultados sugerem que as mudanças ocorriam dentro de um processo de sense-making e adaptação.

Por fim, as interações entre o cumprimento das obrigações do empregador e empregado no contrato psicológico foram analisadas na relação com a mudança no conteúdo do contrato psicológico.

Os resultados suportam a norma de reciprocidade, por meio da demonstração da interação entre o cumprimento das obrigações do empregador e o cumprimento das obrigações do próprio empregado na previsão de mudança no conteúdo do contrato psicológico.

A principal contribuição do primeiro estudo da tese é no sentido de entender o processo de formação do contrato psicológico e de mudança, por meio da contribuição para a compreensão de em quais situações as mudanças mais fortes do contrato psicológico eram mais prováveis de ocorrer.

No geral, os resultados apresentados no primeiro estudo sugerem que o contrato psicológico passa por um período de mudanças, em função da adaptação e da busca de reciprocidade nas experiências vividas no trabalho após a entrada.

A principal conclusão é que as mudanças são mais prováveis de ocorrer não só quando o empregado considerava que a organização não havia cumprido as obrigações dela, mas também quando o empregado considerava que não havia cumprido a sua própria parte no contrato psicológico. Em outras palavras, o mais alto nível de mudança no contrato psicológico ocorreu quando o cumprimento das obrigações de ambas as partes foram baixas.

O estudo da mudança no contrato psicológico indicou que o cumprimento do mesmo pode ser um índice crítico que revela como o indivíduo altera suas ações dentro ou para com a organização.

Importante observar que o cumprimento do contrato psicológico não se refere pura e simplesmente a um atendimento das expectativas do ingressante, mas a um processo relativamente bem sucedido de harmonização das mesmas, o que leva a um equilíbrio no contrato psicológico.

O gestor pode esperar que o funcionário mude a sua percepção a respeito de quais são as obrigações dele em relação à organização dependendo do nível em que a organização cumpre sua parte do acordo. Por outro lado, a percepção que o funcionário tem de obrigações mútuas resulta não só do que a organização faz por ele, mas também da comparação com o que ele próprio faz para a organização.

Tendo-se em conta que as experiências pré-admissão podem ser consideradas antecedentes do contrato psicológico e podem colaborar para a sua formação, estes resultados sugerem implicações úteis para a prática organizacional. Eles fornecem uma maneira interessante de entender melhor como os indivíduos formam seus contratos psicológicos e as potenciais consequências que podem resultar da falha na comunicação entre empregado e empregador.

A mudança no contrato psicológico não é algo positivo ou negativo por si, mas reflete um processo de adaptação. Essa mudança pode ter consequências negativas para a organização se a mesma for condutora à quebra ou à violação do contrato psicológico, como uma grande quantidade de estudos anteriores demonstram (por exemplo, Robinson & Morrison, 2000; Turnley & Feldman, 1999).

Por isso, é essencial prestar atenção aos primeiros contatos com a organização, a partir da experiência inicial, tal como o recrutamento, a seleção e os primeiros períodos de socialização, em uma tentativa de evitar quebras ou violações no contrato psicológico futuras, originados muitas vezes em pequenos mal-entendidos.

O primeiro estudo da tese acrescenta a pesquisas anteriores (Coyle-Shapiro & Kessler, 2002; Dabos & Rousseau, 2004; De Vos et al., 2003; Lester et al., 2007; Robinson et al., 1994; Tekleab et al., 2013; Thomas & Anderson, 1998) pelo estudo da mudança no contrato psicológico.

A contribuição teórica original do primeiro estudo consiste em mostrar a interação entre o cumprimento das obrigações do empregador e do empregado para explicar a mudança no contrato psicológico ao longo do tempo.

A principal implicação prática das descobertas relatadas no primeiro estudo é que os gestores não deveriam esperar que os funcionários percebam suas próprias obrigações a um nível superior se as obrigações da organização não estiverem sendo cumpridas em um nível equivalente, em contrapartida.

O segundo estudo da tese examinou as mudanças no comprometimento organizacional afetivo de funcionários recém-admitidos ao longo dos três primeiros anos de trabalho na organização. Os resultados da modelagem de curva de crescimento latente mostraram que o comprometimento dos ingressantes diminuiu ao longo do tempo a uma taxa de mudança de -0.139 ao ano.

Os resultados deste estudo também sugerem que os níveis comprometimento organizacional afetivo dos recém-admitidos tendem a diminuir durante os primeiros anos de trabalho na organização, como parte de um processo de adaptação. Estes resultados confirmam a tendência encontrada em todos os estudos longitudinais anteriores analisados, de diminuição dos níveis de comprometimento ao longo do tempo.

Foram investigadas as relações entre variáveis antecedentes e duas outras variáveis, quais sejam: o intercepto (nível de comprometimento inicial) e a variável

latente de mudança, resultante da análise longitudinal por meio de modelagem de crescimento latente das três medidas de comprometimento, ao longo de três anos.

Os resultados sugerem que as características pessoais podem ser bons preditores para o nível inicial de comprometimento organizacional afetivo, mas não tanto para a mudança. Os achados mostram que os indivíduos mais velhos, com maior centralidade do trabalho, menor valorização da função econômica do trabalho e maior valorização da função do trabalho de servir à sociedade foram aqueles que tinham níveis mais elevados comprometimento no momento de ingresso à organização.

O efeito de características pessoais foi refletido em diferenças significativas nos níveis iniciais de comprometimento organizacional afetivo entre os indivíduos. Aparentemente, as características pessoais tiveram um efeito sobre o nível de comprometimento que os recém-admitidos estão dispostos a desenvolver (Meyer & Allen, 1997; Mowday et al., 1982).

A variância associada à variável latente de mudança não foi significativa, ou seja, não foram encontradas diferenças significativas entre os indivíduos com relação à mudança dos níveis de comprometimento organizacional afetivo ao longo do tempo. A variância não significativa sugere que os indivíduos mudaram seus níveis de comprometimento em mesma direção e aproximadamente na mesma velocidade. Estes resultados são semelhantes aos obtidos por Lance et al. (2000).

Dado que o padrão de mudança foi aproximadamente o mesmo entre os indivíduos, foi um desafio investigar variáveis antecedentes que poderiam estar relacionadas a diferentes padrões de mudança. Na verdade, nenhum coeficiente de regressão entre as variáveis antecedentes e a variável de mudança foi significativo. No entanto, análises de comparações entre os grupos forneceram algumas pistas.

Foram identificados dois grupos de indivíduos com trajetórias diferentes em relação à amostra total. Um grupo aumentou os níveis de comprometimento organizacional afetivo seguidamente em todas as coletas, ao longo dos três anos. Este grupo resultou composto de menos de 10 por cento do total da amostra, mais precisamente formado por 18 indivíduos que ingressaram à organização com níveis mais baixos de comprometimento em relação ao grupo total e, em seguida, aumentou gradualmente e de forma consistente ao longo dos anos.

A comparação das características pessoais (idade, gênero, escolaridade, valorização dos produtos do trabalho e centralidade do trabalho) dos indivíduos que compuseram esse grupo com as características da amostra total não identificou qualquer diferença significativa. A exceção seria para a variável idade, que se mostrou associada a taxas de decréscimo de comprometimento menores.

Os resultados sugerem, porém, que a experiência de trabalho foi significativamente diferente para essas pessoas. A quantidade de pessoas nesse grupo que foi nomeada para função comissionada foi maior do que em todo o grupo. Eles tiveram proporcionalmente mais mobilidade e trabalharam em departamentos com melhores climas organizacionais.

As análises das comparações entre os grupos indicam que as características pessoais, exceto idade, parecem não ter influência relevante na mudança dos níveis de comprometimento organizacional afetivo, comparando as trajetórias. Os preditores de mudança nos níveis comprometimento organizacional afetivo parecem estar mais relacionados a experiências de trabalho após o ingresso na organização.

Dessa forma, o comprometimento organizacional afetivo provou ser um processo dinâmico que se desenvolve como um resultado de um vínculo estabelecido com a

organização. Por um lado, o ponto inicial da trajetória é definido pelo indivíduo, a sua vontade e as suas características individuais, influenciado pelo ambiente, experiências de trabalho anteriores, e pelo que ele ou ela já sabe sobre a organização. Por outro lado, os resultados sugerem que o desenvolvimento dessa trajetória de comprometimento é mais fortemente influenciado pelas experiências no trabalho após ingresso.

Relativamente poucos estudos examinaram a mudança no comprometimento como uma variável latente (Bentein et al., 2005; Lance et al., 2000; Ng et al., 2010) e, por isso, este estudo está entre os primeiros a determinar as diferentes maneiras pelas quais os indivíduos mudam seus níveis de compromisso ao longo do tempo e as causas para a mudança usando essa abordagem.

O terceiro estudo da tese examinou os efeitos das mudanças no contrato psicológico e no comprometimento no desempenho de funcionários recém-admitidos ao longo dos primeiros anos de trabalho na organização. O desempenho no trabalho foi mensurado a partir de avaliação feita pelo chefe imediato dentro do contexto do processo de avaliação vigente na organização participante.

Especificamente, o terceiro estudo investigou como a combinação do cumprimento do contrato psicológico (composta das obrigações do empregador e do empregado) e o comprometimento organizacional afetivo afeta o desempenho no trabalho.

Os resultados deste estudo demonstraram a existência de uma relação positiva entre o cumprimento do contrato psicológico e o comprometimento organizacional afetivo, confirmando achados de pesquisas anteriores (Conway & Briner, 2002; McInnis et al., 2009). Isso significa que, quando os funcionários percebem que os seus contratos

psicológicas foram cumpridas pelo empregador e por eles mesmos, eles se tornam mais comprometidos com a organização.

Os resultados do terceiro estudo mostraram que o cumprimento do contrato psicológico tem poder explicativo considerável em relação ao comprometimento organizacional afetivo: na análise do primeiro corte temporal, com aproximadamente um ano de organização, a variância explicada foi de 39,7% e no segundo corte temporal, com aproximadamente três anos de organização, a variância explicada foi de 42,4%.

No modelo longitudinal, o comprometimento organizacional afetivo no segundo corte temporal teve 86,3% da variância explicada pela combinação de variáveis que incluiu o cumprimento do contrato psicológico mensurado no mesmo corte temporal (o segundo) e pelo comprometimento organizacional afetivo mensurado no corte temporal anterior, com um ano de organização.

Dessa forma, o terceiro estudo suporta e acrescenta a pesquisas prévias (Conway & Coyle-Shapiro, 2011; Turnley et al., 2003) ao investigar como as variáveis de cumprimento do contrato psicológico, considerando tanto as obrigações do empregador, quanto as do funcionário, predizem desempenho no trabalho. Ou seja, quando os funcionários percebem que seus contratos psicológicos foram cumpridos pelo empregador e por eles mesmos, eles desempenham melhor.

Os resultados mostraram que o cumprimento do contrato psicológico tem algum poder explicativo em relação ao desempenho no trabalho: na análise do primeiro corte temporal, a variância explicada foi de 5,1% e no segundo corte temporal, com aproximadamente três anos de organização, a variância explicada foi de 5,2%.

Não obstante a variância explicada do desempenho pelo cumprimento do contrato psicológico não seja tão expressiva quanto a variância explicada do comprometimento

organizacional afetivo, os resultados são relevantes especialmente em se considerando que uma variável foi mensurada a partir de auto-avaliação (o próprio funcionário avaliou o cumprimento do contrato psicológico) e que a outra variável, desempenho no trabalho, foi mensurada por meio de hetero-avaliação (chefe imediato).

Por outro lado, tanto os coeficientes de correlação, quanto os de regressão obtidos a partir das análises da relação entre comprometimento organizacional afetivo e desempenho no trabalho foram insignificantes nos dois cortes temporais. Estes resultados sugerem que o comprometimento organizacional afetivo isoladamente não tem qualquer poder explicativo sobre o desempenho do trabalho.

Conforme exposto, os resultados do terceiro estudo mostraram que quando os funcionários percebem que seus contratos psicológicos foram cumpridos, tornam-se mais afetivamente comprometidos com a organização e que, quando os funcionários percebem que seus contratos psicológicos foram cumpridos, eles desempenham melhor. Note-se, contudo, que face aos resultados, há um elo faltante neste modelo: não se pode dizer que quando os funcionários são mais comprometidos afetivamente com a organização, eles desempenham melhor.

No entanto, os resultados encontrados sugerem que o comprometimento organizacional afetivo carrega um tipo de mediação na relação entre o cumprimento do contrato psicológico e desempenho no trabalho. Em um modelo integrado, o comprometimento organizacional afetivo aumentou o poder explicativo do cumprimento do contrato psicológico em relação ao desempenho no trabalho.

Juntas em um modelo de mediação, as variáveis de cumprimento do contrato psicológico e comprometimento organizacional afetivo explicaram 7,4% da variação no desempenho no trabalho no primeiro corte temporal e 6,8% no segundo. Ou seja, a

adição do comprometimento organizacional afetivo como uma variável mediadora ao modelo aumentou o explicativo em relação à variação no desempenho no trabalho em 2,3% e 1,6% no primeiro e no segundo cortes temporais, respectivamente.

Essa relação de mediação é denominada estatisticamente como inconsistente, também conhecida como supressão. Uma variável supressora funciona como um agente de limpeza para a variância das variáveis independentes por suprimirem informações irrelevantes na relação de predição. Estes resultados significam que a relação entre o cumprimento do contrato psicológico e o desempenho no trabalho fica mais clara ao se eliminar o efeito de desempenhos melhores devido somente a níveis mais elevados de comprometimento organizacional afetivo.

Na discussão dos achados do terceiro estudo, uma metáfora foi originalmente desenvolvida com o objetivo de facilitar a compreensão desses resultados. Nesta metáfora, os livros mais altos em uma estante representariam os melhores desempenhos no trabalho e os degraus de uma escada, a ser imprescindivelmente utilizada para alcance dos livros, representariam os inúmeros preditores de desempenho no trabalho.

Os resultados mostraram que o comprometimento organizacional afetivo não é preditor de desempenho, ou seja, ele não seria um degrau na escada, enquanto o cumprimento do contrato psicológico sim, o seria. Nesta metáfora, o comprometimento seria representado pelo esforço de esticar os próprios braços que um indivíduo empreende e que isso o faz alcançar livros mais altos na estante.

Note-se que sem a escada, não adianta o indivíduo esticar os braços, porque ele não alcançará livro algum, ou seja, a escada é essencial para todos, independentemente do comprimento dos braços, assim como o comprometimento organizacional afetivo sozinho não prediz desempenho no trabalho. A questão do comprimento e alongamento

dos braços é que entre duas pessoas com a escada de mesma altura (ou seja, no caso deste estudo, níveis similares de cumprimento de contrato psicológico); uma delas consegue alcançar livros mais altos na estante do que a outra.

Dentro da metáfora, no modelo que considera apenas as variáveis de cumprimento do contrato psicológico e desempenho no trabalho, estaria se medindo a altura da escada. No modelo que considera as três variáveis, estaria se medindo a altura total alcançada, tendo em conta o quanto cada pessoa pode ou quer esticar os seus braços. O comprimento dos braços proporciona uma melhor estimativa da altura do livro atingido (ou seja, maior poder explicativo em relação ao desempenho no trabalho), mas somente por meio da escada (ou seja, o cumprimento do contrato psicológico).

Em análise mais pormenorizada que abriu a variável de desempenho nos cinco critérios que a compõem, isto é, responsabilidade, assiduidade, produtividade, iniciativa e disciplina, o comprometimento organizacional afetivo aumentou o poder explicativo do contrato psicológico especialmente em relação aos critérios de iniciativa e produtividade.

Isto significa que os diferentes níveis de comprometimento organizacional afetivo afetam mais o poder explicativo do cumprimento do contrato psicológico em relação à iniciativa e à produtividade dos funcionários. O menor nível de influência foi obtido para os critérios de disciplina e assiduidade, que parecem indiferentes tanto em relação aos níveis de comprometimento organizacional afetivo, quanto em relação ao nível de cumprimento do contrato psicológico.

Por fim, na análise integrada do modelo longitudinal, o desempenho no trabalho no segundo corte temporal teve 12,3% da variância explicada pela combinação de variáveis que incluiu o cumprimento do contrato psicológico mensurado nos dois cortes

temporais e o comprometimento organizacional afetivo também nos dois cortes temporais.

O terceiro estudo desta tese está entre os primeiros a testar a relação entre cumprimento do contrato psicológico, comprometimento organizacional afetivo e desempenho no trabalho empírica e longitudinalmente e nesse aspecto consiste essencialmente a sua originalidade.

O quarto estudo da tese acrescenta dados qualitativos às análises dos dados quantitativos. Os dados qualitativos correspondem a entrevistas realizadas com os mesmos indivíduos ao longo dos três primeiros anos de trabalho na organização.

A partir da análise dos dados quantitativos, foram identificados padrões de trajetórias de desenvolvimento do comprometimento organizacional ao longo do tempo. Os principais padrões identificados foram: “Aprendendo a amar”, “Elevada correspondência”, “Ressaca de lua de mel” e “Aprendendo a odiar”. As três primeiras trajetórias foram originalmente propostas por Solinger et al. (2013) e a última foi originalmente proposta neste estudo.

Dentre a amostra total observou-se que aproximadamente 9% dos indivíduos apresentaram o padrão de desenvolvimento do comprometimento similar ao representado pela trajetória Aprendendo a amar, que seria o padrão daqueles que aumentaram gradual e consistentemente o nível de comprometimento com a organização ao longo dos anos.

Aproximadamente 32% dos indivíduos que compuseram a amostra resultante total apresentaram o padrão de desenvolvimento do comprometimento similar ao representado pela trajetória Elevada correspondência, que seria o padrão daqueles que

ingressaram à organização com elevado nível de comprometimento e se mantiveram dessa forma ao longo dos anos.

Aproximadamente 33% dos indivíduos apresentaram o padrão representado pela trajetória Ressaca de lua de mel, que seria o padrão daqueles que ingressaram à organização com elevado nível de comprometimento e se descomprometeram leve e gradualmente após o ingresso.

Por fim, aproximadamente 14% dos indivíduos apresentaram o padrão representado pela trajetória Aprendendo a odiar, que seria o padrão daqueles que ingressaram à organização com elevado nível de comprometimento e se descomprometeram drasticamente após o ingresso. A queda nos níveis de comprometimento desse grupo foi mais intensa e consistente do que a dos demais indivíduos participantes da pesquisa.

Outros 12% apresentaram outras trajetórias de desenvolvimento de comprometimento com a organização, como por exemplo, moderada ou baixa correspondência, ou uma trajetória de altos e baixos.

Entre os sujeitos entrevistados foram selecionados casos de indivíduos para representar, caracterizar e ilustrar as trajetórias principais, tendo em consideração a impossibilidade e a inconveniência de relatar a totalidade de casos investigados. Ao todo, foram realizadas e analisadas 49 entrevistas, com 21 sujeitos diferentes ao longo de três anos.

As trajetórias mais extremas, Aprendendo a amar e Aprendendo a odiar, foram representadas com um sujeito cada e as trajetórias Elevada correspondência e Ressaca de lua de mel foram representadas por dois sujeitos cada, de maneira a manter a proporcionalidade com a representatividade das referidas trajetórias na amostra total.

Dessa forma, as questões de pesquisa que orientaram o desenvolvimento da tese foram discutidas a partir dos resultados obtidos da análise de 18 entrevistas realizadas com seis funcionários ao longo do tempo. Cada um desses indivíduos foi entrevistado três vezes.

Esses indivíduos receberam nomes fictícios em homenagem a pintores renomados. Todas as características individuais tais como gênero, idade, formação, naturalidade e estado civil e também relatos específicos de experiências de trabalho vividas foram ocultados de maneira a garantir confidencialidade aos entrevistados.

O indivíduo representante da trajetória Aprendendo a amar recebeu o nome fictício de Miró, os representantes da trajetória Elevada correspondência foram nominados Michelangelo e Paul (homenagem a Paul Cézanne), os representantes da trajetória Ressaca de lua de mel foram nominados Gustav e Claude (homenagens a Gustav Klimt e Claude Monet) e o representante da trajetória Aprendendo a amar, Vincent (homenagem a Vincent van Gogh).

Os resultados do quarto estudo reforçam os achados do terceiro ao ilustrar por meio dos casos de Miró, Michelangelo e Paul como o cumprimento das obrigações do empregador no contrato psicológico possui um impacto positivo sobre o comprometimento com a organização. Dessa forma, os resultados corroboram e ilustram resultados de pesquisas anteriores (Castaing, 2006; Coyle-Shapiro & Kessler, 2003; Parzefall, 2008).

Os resultados desse estudo também sugerem que as experiências negativas após o ingresso, as quebras e violações do contrato psicológico possuem um impacto negativo sobre o comprometimento com a organização, como ilustram os casos de Gustav, Claude e Vincent. Estes resultados também corroboram achados de estudos anteriores

(Cassar, 2001; Cassar & Briner, 2011; Coyle-Shapiro & Kessler, 2000; Cavaleiros & Kennedy, 2005; Lapointe et al., 2013; Lemire & Rouillard, 2005; Ng et al., 2010; Simosi, 2013; Shahnawaz & Goswami, 2011).

O quarto estudo também ratifica achados de pesquisas prévias ao ilustrar como as experiências iniciais de trabalho e as expectativas de antes do ingresso à organização impactam o nível de comprometimento do indivíduo com a organização (Dean et al., 1988; Earl & Bright, 2007; Major et al., 1995; Meyer & Allen, 1988, Takeuchi & Takeuchi, 2009).

Os resultados do quarto estudo da tese oferecem contribuições para a interpretação da relação entre contrato psicológico, comprometimento organizacional e desempenho no trabalho. Miró, representante da trajetória Aprendendo a amar, aumentou os níveis de comprometimento, percebeu elevados níveis de cumprimento do contrato psicológico e foi avaliado com elevados níveis de desempenho no trabalho ao longo dos três primeiros anos de emprego.

Por outro lado, Vincent, representante da trajetória Aprendendo a odiar, diminuiu os níveis de comprometimento, percebeu o descumprimento quase total das obrigações do empregador no contrato psicológico e o seu desempenho no trabalho foi avaliado dentro dos parâmetros mínimos suficientes para aprovação no estágio probatório.

Note-se que, sob a percepção de Vincent, ele cumpriu as suas próprias obrigações no contrato psicológico quase inteiramente. Além disso, nota-se que, com exceção de Miró, o cumprimento das obrigações dos funcionários parece ser menos relacionado com os níveis de comprometimento que o cumprimento das obrigações do empregador no contrato psicológico.

Tanto os resultados quantitativos, quanto os qualitativos da pesquisa sugerem que um nível mínimo de cumprimento das obrigações dos funcionários e de desempenho no trabalho é mantido, independentemente dos níveis de comprometimento organizacional, de cumprimento das obrigações dos empregadores no contrato psicológico e até mesmo das experiências de trabalho vividas após o ingresso à organização.

A análise dos casos dos representantes das trajetórias Ressaca de lua de mel oferece insights que favorecem a compreensão das razões pelas quais os estudos a respeito da relação entre comprometimento organizacional e desempenho no trabalho de maneira geral são inconclusivos (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Meyer et al. 2002; Mowday et al., 1982).

Por um lado, os níveis de comprometimento organizacional afetivo diminuíram após o ingresso do indivíduo à organização, fenômeno interpretado como um processo de ajuste, durante o qual o indivíduo começa a entender melhor a organização, seus pontos fortes e fracos, e, em seguida, a imagem idealizada de antes do ingresso cede lugar a uma imagem mais próxima da realidade, o que leva a ajustar os níveis de comprometimento.

Por outro lado, este mesmo processo de ajuste parece conduzir a uma melhoria dos níveis de desempenho no trabalho, melhoria essa que se justifica pelo período durante o qual o indivíduo aprende a trabalhar naquela organização. Devido a essa aprendizagem, o desempenho no trabalho passa a ser melhor avaliado e atinge níveis mais elevados.

Considerando essa interpretação da trajetória Ressaca de Lua mel, hipoteticamente se uma análise quantitativa fosse realizada em um grupo em que fenômeno semelhante ocorresse, a relação observada entre comprometimento e

desempenho seria negativa. Neste caso, os pesquisadores encontrariam dificuldades para interpretar os motivos aos quais se deveria essa relação negativa, uma vez que a suposição generalizada é que tal relação é positiva, ainda que o suporte empírico para essa suposição seja fraco e inconclusivo.

Além disso, a discussão dos resultados dos representantes da trajetória Ressaca de lua de mel fornece evidências de que nem toda diminuição nos níveis de comprometimento é alarmante para a gestão do desempenho no trabalho.

Pesquisas geralmente buscam identificar formas de aumentar os níveis de comprometimento organizacional, com vistas a melhorar a efetividade organizacional. No entanto, o quarto estudo da tese fornece elementos para questionar se a relação entre comprometimento e os resultados relevantes da organização seria linear, como se supõe.

Adicionalmente, também surge como um questionamento se seria mais importante o foco em práticas gerenciais com o objetivo de incentivar o aumento dos níveis de comprometimento ou se seria mais relevante focar em práticas com o objetivo de evitar que os indivíduos se descomprometam drasticamente após o ingresso à organização.

Esse é um questionamento de especial importância principalmente para o contexto da administração pública brasileira, que oferece estabilidade e elevada segurança no emprego aos concursados.

A análise do caso de Vincent, representante da trajetória Aprendendo a odiar, com os mais baixos níveis de comprometimento, exemplifica um indivíduo que mantém o vínculo com a organização, mas se refere a ela como uma prisão.

O discurso de Gustav, representante da trajetória Ressaca de lua de mel, referindo-se ao próprio comprometimento como se estivesse guardando rancor contribui para a discussão que Fink (1992) propõe ao questionar a razão pela qual muitos gestores se

contentam com a obediência, ao invés de tentar construir o real comprometimento de seus funcionários.

Alguns dos resultados desta pesquisa fundamentam a relação de troca entre líder e liderado e a importância das relações interpessoais como antecedentes do comprometimento organizacional, reforçando pesquisas anteriores (Epitropaki & Martin, 2005; Fry et al., 2005; Tyagi & Wotruba, 1993).

Os resultados suportam como antecedentes do comprometimento fatores como suporte organizacional e qualidade das práticas de gestão de pessoas, conforme mostrado por estudos anteriores (Eisenberger et al., 1986; Johnston et al., 1993; Vandenberghe et al. de 2004; Thompson et al., 2004).

Os entrevistados que se declararam desafiados a empregar os seus conhecimentos também foram os indivíduos cujo comprometimento evoluiu positivamente ao longo do tempo. Dessa forma, os resultados do quarto estudo também fornecem suporte para o poder preditivo do escopo de trabalho e do trabalho desafiador para o comprometimento (Meyer et al., 1991; Colarelli et al., 1987; Dunham et al., 1994).

Os resultados da tese em geral mostram como o cumprimento do contrato psicológico e o comprometimento organizacional estão relacionados com o desempenho no trabalho e também como esses construtos se desenvolvem ao longo do tempo.

A seguir, implicações dos resultados para as organizações são discutidas com especial potencial de contribuição para o contexto da administração pública brasileira e para servidores públicos regidos pela Lei n.º 8.112/1990 (Brasil, 1990).

Implicações gerenciais práticas

Os resultados do primeiro estudo da tese oferecem contribuições que favorecem o entendimento sobre como os empregados formam seus contratos psicológicos e as principais consequências que podem resultar de falhas na comunicação daquilo que é esperado pelo empregador. O primeiro estudo enfatiza a importância de incluir aspectos do contrato psicológico no processo seletivo. As atividades de gestão no sentido de estabelecer possíveis trocas previnem problemas futuros e desapontamentos.

Mudanças no contrato psicológico não são nem positivas nem negativas por si só, apenas refletem um processo de adaptação. Contudo, essas mudanças podem ter consequências negativas para a organização se estiverem relacionadas a quebras ou violações no contrato psicológico, como amplamente demonstrado em estudos anteriores (Robinson & Morrison, 2000; Turnley & Feldman, 1999).

A principal implicação gerencial prática do primeiro estudo é que os gestores são alertados a não esperarem que os funcionários percebam as próprias obrigações em relação à organização em um nível elevado se a organização em contrapartida não tem cumprido as obrigações dela em nível equivalente.

Os resultados da tese de maneira geral destacam a importância dos primeiros contatos com a organização, o que inclui a experiência inicial em recrutamento, o processo seletivo e os primeiros períodos de socialização, providenciando aos ingressantes informações acuradas a respeito de seus trabalhos, com o objetivo de evitar potenciais desencontros de expectativas de pré-ingresso e quebras no contrato psicológico que são resultados de mal entendidos (Dean et al., 1988; Earl & Bright, 2007; Major et al., 1995; Meyer & Allen, 1988; Takeuchi & Takeuchi, 2009).

Os resultados do terceiro estudo mostram uma forte ligação entre o cumprimento do contrato psicológico e o comprometimento organizacional afetivo. Isso indica a importância da gestão do contrato psicológico e das expectativas criadas até mesmo antes do ingresso à organização para o desenvolvimento do comprometimento organizacional.

Importante observar que o cumprimento do contrato psicológico não se refere pura e simplesmente a que a organização atenda todas as expectativas do ingressante, mas a um processo relativamente bem sucedido de harmonização dessas expectativas com a realidade da organização, o que envolve a necessidade de atuação gerencial nesse sentido e leva a um equilíbrio no contrato psicológico, maior comprometimento e melhores desempenhos.

Dados os resultados do segundo e do quarto estudo, o desafio que se destaca para os gestores é o de prevenir o comprometimento organizacional de diminuir drasticamente após o ingresso do indivíduo à organização.

Os aspectos que se destacam são relativos à qualidade das práticas de gestão de pessoas, ao suporte organizacional, à relação de troca entre líder e liderado e às relações entre funcionário e organização de uma maneira geral (Eisenberger et al., 1986; Epitropaki & Martin, 2005; Fry et al., 2005; Vandenberghe et al., 2004; Thompson et al., 2004).

Estudos anteriores pressupõem que níveis superiores de comprometimento organizacional afetivo significam um aspecto positivo, que pode levar a melhores desempenhos e a níveis mais baixos de rotatividade, entre outras consequências esperadas do comprometimento (Ricketta, 2008; Wright & Kehoe, 2009).

De qualquer forma, as consequências do comprometimento extremamente elevado podem não ser tão positivas (Mowday et al., 1982; Randall, 1987). Os funcionários extremamente comprometidos podem se tornar disfuncionais no ambiente de trabalho e podem eventualmente gerar um clima contra produtivo de competição, irritando os colegas, e isso pode levar a grandes desapontamentos de forma que o indivíduo vai de um extremo ao outro, do amor ao ódio.

Nesse sentido, as organizações deveriam tentar evitar extremos, tais como os níveis de comprometimento extremamente elevados, que podem levar a grandes decepções. Quanto mais elevadas as expectativas, maiores as chances de que a percepção de cumprimento do contrato psicológico seja insatisfatória. Dessa forma, evitar que se criem falsas expectativas durante os estágios do processo seletivo é de crucial importância.

Os resultados obtidos mostram que alguns indivíduos entraram com níveis mais baixos de comprometimento se comparados à média geral dos outros sujeitos, mas em compensação se descomprometeram menos ao longo do tempo.

Talvez o grupo de indivíduos com padrão de desenvolvimento do comprometimento organizacional representado pela trajetória “Aprendendo a amar” tenha sido mais realista sobre a organização, tenha tido expectativas mais realistas e isso tenha afetado a trajetória deles.

Ao longo do processo de seleção e admissão e durante o processo de socialização inicial, a organização deve se esforçar por conhecer os novos funcionários, cumprir as suas promessas e proporcionar condições para que os níveis de comprometimento sejam mantidos ou elevados.

Haveria a necessidade por um plano de carreira, com maior distinção em termos de complexidade das atividades em relação aos diferentes cargos, de maneira a garantir a percepção de equidade e a oferta de trabalhos desafiadores dentro da proposta de cada cargo.

Seria igualmente importante a oferta de possibilidades de desenvolvimento na carreira para perfis profissionais de gestão e de assessoria, de maneira a que somente se dediquem ao exercício de cargos de gestão aqueles que possuam as competências de relacionamento interpessoal, comunicação, negociação, gestão de conflitos e liderança, entre outras. Dessa forma, evita-se que perfis profissionais de excelentes técnicos exerçam cargos gerenciais apenas por falta de opção para crescimento na carreira.

Os resultados do terceiro estudo proveem *insights* que podem ser úteis para a prática de gestão de desempenho nas organizações. É preciso considerar se os critérios avaliados são relevantes para o alcance das metas organizacionais.

No caso do sistema de avaliação de desempenho da organização estudada, por exemplo, os critérios para assiduidade e disciplina têm o mesmo peso que critérios como produtividade e iniciativa. O ajuste desse sistema depende da verificação da importância de cada critério para aprimoramento do desempenho organizacional.

Os resultados do terceiro estudo mostraram que os critérios de assiduidade e disciplina não tinham significativa variabilidade entre os indivíduos, sendo, portanto inábeis em diferenciá-los em termos de desempenho adequado ou inadequado. Nesse sentido, uma das recomendações seria o uso de uma escala mais ampla, talvez de um a dez, em lugar da escala de quatro pontos correntemente utilizada.

Contudo, o mais importante de se ressaltar é que a avaliação de desempenho poderia ser mais efetiva ao focar nos critérios capazes de diferenciar os indivíduos. Não

com o objetivo de estimular a competição, rotular como melhores ou piores, mas como maneira de comunicar de maneira transparente o que é esperado do indivíduo em termos de desempenho e como o atendimento a essas expectativas pode ser aperfeiçoado.

Para fazer isso, a recomendação seria para que a organização primeiramente identificasse os comportamentos de desempenho relevantes e que mais contribuem para a melhoria do desempenho organizacional.

Para critérios identificados como de menor importância ou irrelevantes, o ideal seria eliminá-los, promovendo o foco nos critérios relevantes. Por exemplo, assiduidade e disciplina, no caso da organização estudada, além de serem os critérios menos hábeis a diferenciar os indivíduos, foram também os critérios menos relacionados ao comprometimento organizacional.

Sendo, pois, critérios cuja mensuração e cujo controle podem ser automatizados, seria recomendável a desincumbência da necessidade de avaliação em relação aos mesmos e o incremento do foco em outros critérios, mais efetivamente vinculados ao comprometimento organizacional e ao desempenho no trabalho como um todo. A automatização possibilitaria uma estruturação de banco de horas em que ficariam registrados créditos e débitos de jornada diária e semanal, possibilitando compensações recíprocas e maior foco no desempenho e na necessidade do trabalho.

Contudo, considerando-se as limitações impostas muitas vezes pela carência de sistemas informatizados, de estrutura física de equipamentos que permitam a automatização, ou até mesmo de fundamento legal que viabilize um mínimo de flexibilidade na administração pública, a atribuição de pesos diferentes a esses critérios de menor importância seria um avanço.

Para o conhecimento e distinção entre critérios relevantes e irrelevantes para a efetividade organizacional, faz-se imprescindível a otimização dos processos de trabalho, o aprimoramento das práticas de planejamento, com a construção de indicadores e métricas mais precisos e vinculados aos objetivos estratégicos da organização.

Em segundo lugar, recomenda-se que a organização tente encontrar mecanismos para favorecer tais comportamentos de desempenho relevantes. Em terceiro lugar, há de se encontrar maneiras para que esses comportamentos sejam reconhecidos, valorizados e estimulados.

Cientes dos efeitos que o comissionamento tem no comprometimento organizacional dos servidores públicos, e sendo apenas um dos instrumentos de reconhecimento, os resultados dos estudos fundamentam a recomendação para que a organização comunique claramente como suas decisões a respeito desse assunto são tomadas (Meyer & Allen, 1997).

É importante manter as linhas de comunicação abertas de forma que, em casos de insatisfação, os indivíduos possam comunicar ao invés de simplesmente deixar a organização ou esperar passivamente pelas condições adequadas para melhorar. É essencial que os indivíduos se percebam como capazes de comunicar e procurar por melhores condições de alcançar elevados desempenhos no trabalho.

Neste sentido, os resultados do quarto estudo sugerem a importância de se atentar à estrutura excessivamente hierarquizada que pode representar um empecilho à fluidez das informações e à qualidade da comunicação. A implicação prática seria para que a organização empreendesse esforços de reestruturação no sentido de reduzir os níveis hierárquicos e integrar mais as diversas áreas de trabalho.

Uma estrutura excessivamente hierarquizada prejudica a comunicação, além de frequentemente ter como consequência prática a multiplicidade de comando, que desfavorece a gestão do contrato psicológico com menor clareza de metas e objetivos e menor prática de *feedback*, favorece o descomprometimento e dificulta o acompanhamento do funcionário e a gestão do desempenho.

Além disso, a horizontalização da organização possibilitaria a convolação de parte das funções gerenciais em funções técnicas ou de assessoria de menor nível, algo como uma função para Integrante de Equipe de Alto Desempenho, a serem concedidas em maior número a indivíduos em equipes com reconhecido desempenho e a serem rodiziadas entre os componentes periodicamente, de acordo com avaliação de desempenho individual e da equipe.

O foco da avaliação no indivíduo e de parte do reconhecimento à equipe é uma maneira de incentivar a cooperação e a recuperação de funcionários descomprometidos ou com desempenhos insatisfatórios.

O estímulo à competição em um ambiente de estabilidade no emprego pode acabar resultando em acomodação daqueles que frequentemente perdem as disputas empreendidas. A valorização do indivíduo em um ambiente em que não há perdas aos comportamentos de indisposição em colaborar pode conduzir ao individualismo e à competição interna excessiva, contexto no qual a organização aumenta a dependência em relação aos talentos para o alcance da produtividade. Contudo, uma organização não deveria se sustentar apenas em função de grandes talentos.

O estímulo à cooperação e à integração, por outro lado, pode promover o compartilhamento de conhecimentos, o desenvolvimento profissional e a união de todos com uma finalidade comum: o alcance da missão organizacional.

Entre as formas existentes para reconhecimento, valorização e estímulo, as formas não pecuniárias merecem especial atenção no contexto da administração pública. São formas viáveis para estabelecimento de reconhecimento com vistas à gestão do desempenho e que se inserem dentro do limite do que é discricionário na administração pública brasileira.

As decisões sobre a participação em treinamentos, em congressos internacionais, sobre a concessão de flexibilização de horários, de folgas, de participação em ações de um programa de qualidade de vida, ou até mesmo localização de estações de trabalho, equipamentos, uso de vagas em estacionamento são decisões em grande parte discricionárias, por exemplo.

Um programa de reconhecimento em que os desempenhos positivos pudessem ser recompensados por algum benefício escolhido pelo próprio funcionário, ofertado no interesse da organização, seria uma das maneiras hipotéticas para um sistema de reconhecimento e recompensas na gestão pública.

A falta de consequências ao desempenho, tanto ao satisfatório, quanto ao insatisfatório, é o aspecto mais comprometedor de qualquer sistema de gestão do desempenho que se pretenda implantar na gestão pública, como ilustra a declaração de um dos entrevistados: “se eu trabalhar mais, eu vou ganhar exatamente o mesmo salário que o cara que não faz exatamente nada o dia inteiro e fica só na internet e no telefone. Para quê que eu vou me dedicar? Eu não sou otário, eu não sou bobo.”

Os achados dos estudos sugerem que, no contexto em que os funcionários possuem estabilidade no emprego e limitada ligação entre desempenho, remuneração e reconhecimento, a organização corre o risco de manter indivíduos descomprometidos e com desempenhos insatisfatórios por longos períodos.

A organização inserida nesse contexto também corre o risco de manter indivíduos altamente comprometidos com a organização, mas que não desempenham bem por causa de falta de vontade, energia ou competência. Há uma lacuna no conhecimento sobre como tratar casos de baixo comprometimento organizacional (Morrow, 2011) e de desempenhos insatisfatórios no setor público.

Nas organizações do setor privado, a consequência mais provável para desempenhos insatisfatórios seria a demissão ou a partida voluntária do indivíduo. Contudo, no setor público brasileiro, há a possibilidade real de que indivíduos completamente descomprometidos e até mesmo com níveis de desempenho no trabalho inaceitáveis permaneçam na organização indefinidamente.

Os resultados do quarto estudo indicam que esses indivíduos se tornam um incômodo e provocam a percepção de inequidade entre os colegas, como observado a partir dos comentários de Paul, Claude e Vincent.

Para os servidores da administração pública brasileira regidos pela Lei 8.112/1990, demissão por desempenho insatisfatório envolve um processo administrativo no qual o servidor tem direito a ampla defesa legal.

Se por um lado é absolutamente essencial que os servidores públicos continuem protegidos contra os desmandos de administradores, por outro lado seria necessário que os gestores públicos dispusessem de um sistema de suporte legal para agir em casos de desempenhos no trabalho indubitavelmente insatisfatórios.

Neste sentido, a instituição de uma comissão a ser composta por servidores e gestores da própria organização e também oriundos de outros órgãos, representantes do Tribunal de Contas da União, do Ministério do Planejamento, Orçamento e Gestão, dos sindicatos e da sociedade para julgamento de desempenhos insatisfatórios e com poder

de decidir pela eventual demissão de algum servidor público seria de extrema valia para a despersonalização e viabilização do processo de gestão de desempenho no contexto da administração pública.

Em síntese, destaca-se a necessidade imperiosa de um instrumento legal e de mecanismos de gestão efetivamente hábeis para administrar o desempenho no trabalho e gerar consequências tanto para reconhecimento de desempenhos satisfatórios, quanto para correção de insatisfatórios na administração pública brasileira.

9. About the Author

Curriculum Vitae - <http://lattes.cnpq.br/5963361353979234>



Letícia Gomes Maia was born in 1981 in Minas Gerais, Brazil. She studied management at Federal University of Minas Gerais, which she started in 1999. The same year, before enter the University, she started to work in the private sector as a management assistant. In 2003, she passed her first examination to work in the public sector. In 2006, she started to

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