



Measuring the effects of an organisational development intervention on the psychological contracts of senior managers within an evolving healthcare setting

Moya Higham

Abstract

This study investigated the effect of a training (Organisational Development) intervention on a group of senior managers in an NHS Trust that provides mental health services in the northwest. The group undertook Resilience training, the effect of the training was measured and the results compared with a separate group of managers (control group) where a training intervention had not taken place. The study used a questionnaire that was administered to both groups of managers at two time points: firstly before the OD intervention and secondly one month after the intervention.

The study examined the effects of the OD intervention on the psychological contract, in terms of employees' attitudes to: job satisfaction, organisational commitment, sense of job security and perception of pressure at work. It also explored how behavioural consequences were influenced, such as motivation and the intention to remain at, or leave, the organisation. Results indicated that there were no measurable changes in the psychological contract of senior managers as a result of the Organisational Development intervention. This could be attributable to the radical change that the NHS is undergoing and the small sample size that statistically could have diminished the power of analysis.

Results indicated that there were no measurable changes in the psychological contract of senior managers as a result of the Organisational Development intervention. This could be attributable to the small sample size that statistically diminished the power of analysis.

Key words:	Psychological contract	Training	Questionnaire	Organisational Commitment Questionnaire	Healthcare
-------------------	------------------------	----------	---------------	--	------------

Introduction

Previous research

Meyer and Allen (1997) suggest that employees who receive training - particularly training intended to provide them with opportunities for advancement - might perceive that the organisation values them as individuals, which bolsters their sense of self-worth and therefore develops a stronger commitment. They continue that commitment is a psychological state that characterises an employee's relationship with the organisation and can impact on whether an employee stays or leaves the organisation. In other words, strong commitment is associated with desirable outcomes, (for the organisation) such as good attendance, low staff turnover and higher productivity. The commitment outlined above is described in terms of an attitude (Mowday, Steers and Porter, 1979). In attitudinal commitment, the relationship between the employer and the employee is reciprocal and therefore a satisfactory balance is achieved.

Conway and Briner (2005) develop this relationship theme and use Barnard's (1938) equilibrium theory, cited in Conway and Briner (2005), that is based on the employment relationship being an exchange and that gaining employees' participation will depend on adequate rewards perceived as being received from the organisation. Conway and Briner (2005) also looked at Argyris (1960), who believed that employees and their organisation created psychological contracts (PCs) if employees feel that management is respecting their right to develop and grow. Then in return, employees will also respect the right of the organisation to evolve. Schein (1965), cited in Conway and Briner (2005), suggests a matching hypothesis between what an employee's expectations are of what the organisation will provide and what he owes the organisation – the greater the matching of expectations from employee and employer, the more likely employers will observe increased job satisfaction, productivity and reduced turnover.

Rousseau and Greller (1994) defined the psychological contract as encompassing the actions employees believe are expected of them and what response they expect in return from the employer. This study aims to build on the work of Robinson and Rousseau (1994) who looked at two groups of MBA graduates in a longitudinal study at two time points; 1987 and 1989. They examined the impact of violations on the PCs of the graduates. A violation occurs when a promised obligation from either employee or employer has not been met. For example, if a training course that has been promised in return for achieving objectives is not delivered, then an individual's PC has been violated. Morrison and Robinson (1997), Page 64, cited in Conway and Briner (2005) describe breach "as a cognitive comparison of what has been received and what was promised and violation as the extreme affective or emotional reactions that may accompany breaches". In Robinson and Rousseau's (1994) survey of MBA graduates, it was found that broken promises were most likely to be related to the provision of training, levels of compensation and opportunities for promotion. They found that occurrence of violations correlated positively with staff turnover and negatively with trust, satisfaction and intention to remain.

Benson (2006) suggests that over the last two decades mergers, downsizing and re-organisations have resulted in uncertain job security for employees. Benson goes on to say that this uncertainty has impacted the traditional employment relationship where employees exchange commitment and loyalty to an organisation for promise of long-term employment. Benson's study examines the relationship between participation in employee development, organisational commitment and intention to turnover in a manufacturing company. The longitudinal study examined different organisational development interventions, namely company training classes, on the job training and tuition-reimbursement courses. The results found that on-the-job training was positively related to organisational commitment and negatively related to turnover. These results indicate that employees who participate in on-the-job-training and gain specific skills are more committed and less likely to leave the organisation, while employees who participate in tuition-reimbursement express higher intention to leave the organisation.

Jacobs and Warrington (2003) claim in their literature review that employee development programmes make a positive contribution to organisational performance. They refer to Harrod (2000) who suggested that productivity increased by 4.7% at Honeywell and added \$2bn in savings as a result of employee development programmes.

Birdi (2006, 2010) suggests that much research on the impact of development activities concentrates on the individual (Kirkpatrick, 1959 cited by Birdi 2006, 2010). Birdi suggests that a broader perspective should be adopted to accurately assess the effectiveness of training and development interventions. Therefore, the Taxonomy of Training and Development Outcomes (TOTADO) framework was developed, which suggests four basic levels – the individual, the team, organisational and societal – a range of relevant criteria are used within each level. Birdi suggests that in order to identify factors that influence training outcomes, to just consider outcomes, such as individual learning of knowledge and skills, work behaviour and organisational performance is insufficient. A broader perspective is needed on the types of outcomes that influence the effectiveness of training and development.

According to McGregor et al (2009), approximately £30 billion is spent on training and development annually but few organisations evaluate the return on investment or determine whether the intervention supported the achievement of planned organisational goals. McGregor points out that learning and development (L&D) activities are not only associated with formal learning, they also occur during mentoring, coaching, secondments, complaint handling etc. While working in an organisation, McGregor successfully implemented an evaluation of the organisation's Learning and Development by using Birdi's TOTADO, to set up a series of trio interviews with the participant, line-manager and peer. To ensure transfer of learning to the workplace, individuals completed a learning and development activity evaluation tool at later stages ie one to two months after and six or nine months after the intervention. Adopting the TOTADO model promoted a joined-up approach that linked L&D into human resource practices and ensured that L&D was part of those practices from induction to exit.

Pate, Martin and McGoldrick's (2003) longitudinal study over three years is based in a textile manufacturing company that had faced significant change and re-organisation at the end of the 1990s. Their study investigated the impact of psychological contract violation on employee attitudes and behaviour. They used mixed methodology; quantitative attitude surveys, interviews and analysis of absence data. Their results found that triggers of violation impinged on employee attitudes but not on behaviour, trends substantiated by analysis of absenteeism records. Also the qualitative data also helped to explain this trend and identified contextual issues, such as labour market conditions and perception of job security.

Mowday, Steers and Porter (1979) developed the Organisational Commitment Questionnaire to validate employee commitment to work organisations. It is based on 2563 employees in nine organisations. They identified commitment as an important variable in understanding the work behaviour of employees in organisations.

The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development's (CIPD) 1997 survey found that the state of the PC has an important bearing on employee-centred outcomes, job satisfaction, organisational commitment, sense of job security and perception of pressure at work. It also found that the behavioural consequences of the PC, such as motivation, effort, attendance/absence, organisational citizenship and the intention to stay/quit were influenced. The CIPD has developed and validated a number of survey questions that examine whether the PC has an impact on motivation. The questionnaire for the current study uses a selection of validated questions from both the OCQ and the CIPD's survey.

This study aims to further the work of the above studies, particularly Robinson and Rousseau (1994) and Pate, Martin and McGoldrick's (2003), whose studies both look at the nature of the PC with particular reference to OD. This current study will also provide up to date findings in a healthcare setting.

When researching the PC about 90% of studies survey participants on one occasion in cross-sectional studies and only two out of ten gather data from participants on several occasions in longitudinal studies. There is no theory that specifies what would be an appropriate time lag or even how it should be identified but it does seem that long time intervals are inappropriate. Taris and Kompier (2003) suggest that longitudinal research should obtain data from at least three or more points in time.

Background information and Context

According to Shield and Thorpe (2002) New Labour implemented and sustained prolonged structural changes and extensive process engineering to provide greater patient focus. This included the majority of the NHS budget being switched to front line staff and primary care trusts.

Only seven years later, Andrew Lansley, the new Coalition Secretary for Health published his White Paper that detailed how power will be devolved from Whitehall to patients and professionals. Triggle (2010) in the Guardian stated that the NHS was to undergo major re-structuring in one of the biggest shake-ups in its history.

Part of that shake-up was that General Practitioners are to take charge of much of the budget to achieve savings of £20 billion by 2014. In order to achieve those cost savings, ten strategic health authorities and 152 primary care trusts will be abolished.

As a direct result of this White Paper, from 1 April 2011, the foundation trust in this study will be managing the community services that have, until now, been provided by nearby Primary Care Trusts (PCTs). Therefore the community services will merge with the Foundation Trust and as a result the number of staff will approximately double from 2500 to just fewer than 5000. A merger, according to Shield (2002), is in economics terminology, the voluntary union of two organisations when it is thought they can do better amalgamating. The union of two trusts would be a horizontal merger and would generally be pursued either for increased profitability through economies of scale.

In the mergers of Southport and Ormskirk NHS Trusts in 1999 and Warrington and Halton NHS Trusts in 2001, Herriot et al (1997), cited by Shield (2002) identifies the PC as a potential indicative factor of the success of mergers. He goes on to explain that the PC enables an analysis, understanding and a positive resolution of current employment-relationship difficulties in the UK. Following a merger, Cartwright and Cooper (2000) suggest that a new PC has to be established. Rousseau (1990, 1995) makes a distinction in the PC between the relational obligations such as recognition, loyalty and training and transactional obligations, such as pay and good work. She claims that relational PCs involve higher levels of commitment than transactional. And it is the former that are likely to be perceived by employees as damaged by merger.

Moore and Cooper (1996) suggest that most jobs generate some degree of stress and strain and it seems that this problem may be more apparent among individuals working in emotionally demanding environments. Mental health professionals are indeed operating in these environments and therefore particularly vulnerable to emotional exhaustion and psychological tensions.

The OD intervention in this study was Resilience Training and it is suggested (Robertson and Cooper, 2010) that resilience enables individuals to maintain high performance and positive well-being even when facing adverse conditions, change and unexpected misfortunes. By improving an individual's resilience it allows them to respond better to challenging situations, which positively affects their psychological well-being.

Aims & Objectives

The aim of this study was to examine the effect of organisational development interventions on a group of senior managers at a North West NHS Trust and to compare their responses to the responses from a similar group of senior managers, where interventions had not occurred. The research aimed to investigate what effect the OD intervention had on the psychological contracts (PCs) of senior managers because the PC provides valuable information on employment relationships, which represent an employee's beliefs,

perceptions, and informal obligations between an employer and an employee (Guest 2002).

Hypothesis

The hypothesis for this study is that there will be a positive effect on individuals' PCs, based on their attitudes; that their job satisfaction, organisational commitment, sense of job security will increase and their perception of pressure at work will decrease. Similarly, based on their behaviours, their motivation will increase and their intention to leave will be less likely when they have experienced OD interventions.

The null hypothesis for this study is that there will be no effect on individuals' PCs in terms of the attitudes and behaviours mentioned above when they have experienced OD interventions.

The independent variable is:

Participation in the OD intervention, which is Resilience training (Appendix 1)

The dependent variable is:

The scores on the psychological contract

Method

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to explore the effect and worth of OD interventions on the psychological contract - that is, do they have a positive effect on employees' attitudes, such as job satisfaction, organisational commitment, sense of job security and perception of pressure at work and on behaviours ie. motivation and the intention to remain at, or leave the organisation.

The study was conducted as follows:

1. Two groups of participants were approached and recruited from a North West healthcare organisation. One group participated in an OD intervention (Resilience Training, see Appendix 1). This group is referred to as 'the intervention group'. The second group did not participate in an OD intervention during the course of the study. This group is referred to as 'the control group'.
2. The intervention and control groups completed a detailed questionnaire (Appendix 2) which explored their individual psychological contracts (NB data was collected anonymously). (Time One)
3. The intervention group then participated in the prescribed OD intervention in October 2010.
4. A period of one month elapsed post completion of the OD intervention.

5. Both groups completed the same questionnaire as at the beginning of the study. (Time Two) The resultant data was analysed and interpreted.

Design

The study adopted a quasi-experimental approach as this approach mimics randomised experiments and is best suited to estimating the effects of an intervention and when random assignment of participants is not feasible (Hesse-Biber and Leavy 2008). Quantitative measures (questionnaire) were used to assess the effect of attitudes and behaviours on the psychological contract. According to Fife-Schaw, (1995), questionnaires are probably the most widely used research tool because of the low cost and minimal resource requirements to undertake the study. It was therefore considered most appropriate for this study.

Participants completed a validated questionnaire, which consisted of 25 questions relating to commitment, pressure at work, job security, intention to quit, motivation and job satisfaction. Several items were negatively phrased and were reverse scored to reduce response bias. The questionnaire used validated questions taken from Mowday, Steers and Porter (1979) Organisational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ) and from the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development's (CIPD) 1997 survey on employee motivation and the psychological contract. The OCQ is based on a series of studies among 2563 employees in nine organisations and satisfactory test-retest and internal consistency reliabilities were found. The CIPD's data is drawn from their 1996 national survey of the employment relationship. Harris Research undertook the data collection among a sample of 1000 workers. The survey covered questions about a number of Human Resource Management practices, including the PC. Using Cronbach's Alpha reliability coefficient, internal consistency was judged as being good for the psychological contract, coefficient above 0.8, acceptable for commitment, security and motivation, coefficient in the 0.7 range.

The participants were selected using 'pinpoint selection' (Breakwell and Millward 1995) as the intervention group was prescribed by the intervention event and a purposive sample of participants was used. The control group of participants was selected from the organisation's Electronic Staff Records system, which provided a number of staff at similar levels to the intervention group. The staff to be allocated to the control group were taken from the top of the list.

This study used repeated measures, within subjects, which aimed to eliminate random error due to individual differences (Mitchell and Jolley 2010) at two points in time, prior to and subsequent to the OD intervention.

The method of analysis used was quantitative (questionnaire) and the data was analysed using a 2x2 mixed ANOVA (between intervention vs no intervention and within Time 1 vs Time 2).

A small pilot was carried out before the experiment commenced on two participants to ensure that they understood what was required of them and that the apparatus was fit for purpose.

Participants

40 participants agreed to participate, however due to “drop outs” the study was conducted with 24 participants, (12 individuals in the intervention group and 12 individuals in the control group). The individuals were aged between 25 and 55 years. The research was carried out in the organisation’s Learning & Development department.

Apparatus

Each participant was initially briefed by email (Appendix 3) and when they attended the OD intervention they were given a Participant Information Sheet (Appendix 4) and Consent Form (Appendix 5). The consent form explained that participants had the right to withdraw at any time and that by signing the form indicated a willingness to take part. The participants in the intervention group and the control group were then asked to complete the questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of twenty-five statements and participants were asked to read each statement and circle the number on a scale of 1 (strongly agree) to 5 (strongly disagree), which most accurately matched their view. A debrief (Appendix 6) was issued to each participant that reiterated the aim of the study, assured participants of their anonymity and gave participants the researcher's contact details.

Procedure

Twelve staff members that attended the OD intervention were allocated to the intervention group and twelve staff members not attending the OD intervention were allocated to the control group. The potential research participants were briefed by email initially (Appendix 3) by the researcher as to the nature of the study. One week later, the participants attending the Resilience Training were provided with further details relating to the study (Participant Information Sheet, Appendix 4) and what their involvement was likely to be. If they agreed to take part in the study, a Consent Form (Appendix 5) was completed. The participants allocated to the control group were similarly briefed by email (Appendix 7). One week later they were sent their Participant Information Sheet (Appendix 8), Consent Form and the questionnaire. All participants were asked to complete the questionnaire by circling the number next to the statement, which matched their view most closely, according to the Likert Scale from 1 (strongly agree) to 5 (strongly disagree). Completing the questionnaire was not timed and when each participant had completed the questionnaire, they were given a debriefing note (Appendix 6) and informed that the same process would be repeated in one month's time. Participants were thanked for their time and given the opportunity to ask questions.

Timetable

The following table outlines the sequence of events related to this study

Event Timing	Description
October 2010	Participants briefed by email
October 2010	Participants complete questionnaire
November 2010	Training intervention
November 2010	Participants complete same questionnaire
December 2010	Results collected
January 2011	Data analysis
March 2011	Report completed

Ethics

Ethical considerations were considered in accordance with the British Psychological Society guidelines. All participants completed consent forms, which provided their informed consent and were assured of their right to withdraw at any time. Participants were assured that all data would be kept anonymous, however, they could not be guaranteed that their data would be kept confidential. A debriefing took place at the end of Time 1 and Time 2.

This area of research is not seen as a potentially unethical area. Participants were not deceived as it was made quite clear what the questionnaire was investigating and there were no dangers to the physical or psychological well being of either the researcher or the participants.

This study did not involve participants who may have been classed as vulnerable and would not need assistance to give informed consent. Additionally, participants were briefed before they took part in the study.

With regard to the recruitment and sampling of the participants, the NHS Research Ethics Committee and the Trust's Research and Development department was approached for permission to approach participants. (The response from the Ethics Committee has been received and is included in Appendix 9).

It is not expected that this study impacted participants' psychological well-being, physical health, personal values or dignity, beyond that which they face in their normal everyday lifestyles. Nor did this study involve invasive, intrusive or potentially harmful procedures of any kind to the participants. Participants were not coerced in any way, and inducements were not offered. However, participants in the control group were offered the same or similar organisational development intervention at a later date. During the study the researcher was not facing risks, nor was the participants. The research findings will be made available on request to all participants that took part in the study.

Results

Two groups of managers participated in the Study: a Control group (N = 12) and an Intervention group (N=12). Each group was asked an identical set of questions which were designed to explore the following categories:

- organisational commitment
- job satisfaction
- job security
- pressure at work
- motivation
- intention to leave

Participants scored each question based on the following scale:

- 1 = strongly agree
- 2 = agree
- 3 = neither agree or disagree
- 4 = disagree
- 5 = strongly disagree

An overall score for each participant was derived by calculating the mean of the scores for all questions.

In this repeated measures design the managers were tested at the beginning of the study, before the training intervention (Time 1) and one month after the training intervention (Time 2). Scores were thus obtained for organisational commitment, job satisfaction, job security, pressure at work, motivation, intention to leave and an overall score calculated for each participant.

The data was entered into SPSS 18 for analysis. All tables, graphs and analysis derived from the raw data (scores) together with the SPSS outputs may be found in Appendix 13. There were no significant outliers and no participant errors identified in the data.

Overall Impact on the Psychological Contract

The following data relates to the results for the overall impact on the psychological contract

Table 1

Means and standard deviations for overall impact at Time 1 (before the training intervention) and Time 2 (one month after the training intervention)

	Time 1: Before		Time 2: One Month Later	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Control	3.15	0.40	2.98	0.24
Intervention	2.98	0.35	2.97	0.29
Control & Intervention	3.07	0.38	2.98	0.26

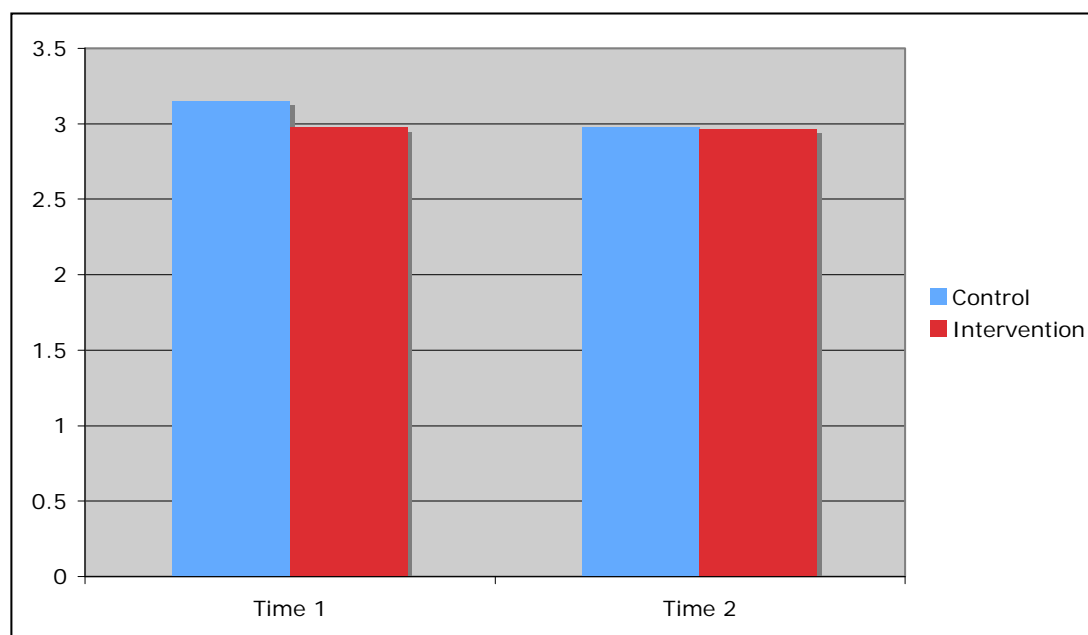
A 2x2 mixed ANOVA was performed on the data. As the experiment involved repeated measures, sphericity was assumed by checking Mauchly's Test – value is 1 as there were only 2 levels of repeated measures (Time 1 and Time 2).

Tests of Within Subjects Effects show that the main effect of Time $F(1,22) = 1.184$, $p < 0.001$ indicates that there was no significant main effect of Time on the results.

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects show that there was no significant interaction effect observed $F(1,22) = 1.01$, $p < 0.001$.

Tests of Within-Subjects Effects show that there was no significant main effect of the Training Intervention $F(1,22) = 0.774$, $p < 0.001$ on the overall psychological contract i.e. the psychological contract was neither positively nor negatively influenced by the intervention received.

Figure 1 below illustrates this – there is insignificant difference between the results for the Control and Intervention Groups or between Time 1 and Time 2.



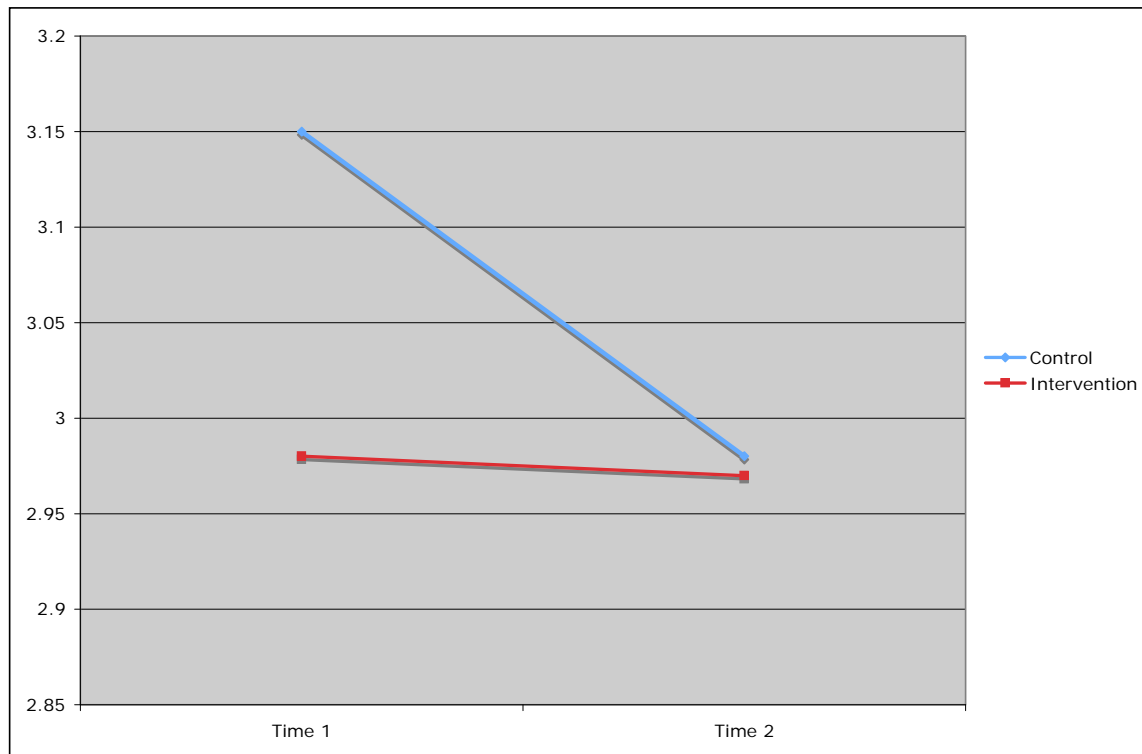


Figure 1: Mean Scores for Overall Psychological Contract at Time 1 & Time 2; comparing Control & Intervention Groups

Further analysis of the results for the different categories (organisational commitment, job satisfaction, job security, pressure at work, motivation, intention to leave) demonstrated insignificant difference between groups (Control & Intervention) and times (Time 1 and Time 2). These results may be found in Appendix 14.

Comparison of Results with Published Data

A comparison of results obtained in this study was made with published data from Guest and Conway's (1997) CIPD survey. The survey was conducted in July 1996 on a random sample of 1000 people in employment. The survey explored, amongst other areas, motivation, pressure at work, job satisfaction and job security. Similar questions were posed to those in this study and a similar scoring system applied.

The following table compares the data obtained from this study of managers and the results obtained by the CIPD in 1997

Table 2

Means for Time 1, Time 2 and Combined compared to means from CIPD survey 1997

Mean Scores	Time1	Time2	Time 1 & 2 Combined	CIPD
Motivation	2.33	2.65	2.49	2.56
Pressure at Work	2.32	2.38	2.35	2.69
Job Satisfaction	2.39	2.79	2.59	2.81
Job Security	3.68	3.33	3.51	2.67
Mean of Means	2.68	2.79	2.73	2.68

Discussion

Main Findings

The current study found that there were no measurable changes in the PC of senior managers as a result of the OD intervention. This could be attributable to: (i) The small sample size that statistically diminished the power of analysis. The quasi-experimental design of the study was chosen as it best suited the field setting of this study; however a larger sample size would have been more useful.

(ii) It is likely that a single OD intervention, i.e. Resilience Training, when not in the context of planned continuous development will not have an effect on an individual's PC.

(iii) Research is ongoing into the optimal time lag between interventions. The time lag of one month in this study between Time 1 and Time 2 could have been too short. It is unlikely that an instant effect would be observed.

(iv) The possible influence of wider planned organisational change in the NHS could have impacted the results i.e. a modest training intervention may be subsumed by the wider context affecting managers.

(vi) While the findings in this study were generally statistically insignificant it was interesting to compare the participants' scores in the current study with scores obtained in Guest and Conway's (1997) CIPD survey and find that there was little difference between the two sets of scores, which provides some validity for the findings of this study.

Further findings

The findings in this study did not support the hypothesis and the above main findings probably had a bearing on the hypothesis. In addition, the following findings are worth considering.

Conway and Briner (2005) point out that the theory of psychological contracts is vague regarding the timeframes around which exchanges take place. They state that when empirical studies have collected longitudinal data, the waves that are conducted could be separated by months or years. Therefore they suggest that the time lapse between surveys is not justified in any way. However, Taris and Kompier (2003) counter this suggestion by proposing that rather than having a particular minimum number of participants to reach sufficient statistical power, studies should include more time points to capture more fully the developmental aspects of the process. They go on to state that simple two-phase designs are not sufficient to tell researchers much about the rate of change or about the shape of presumed causal relations. As this study was a two phase one, it would have been useful if it was more longitudinal and captured more time points.

The duration of the OD intervention in this study was two days and it is likely that members of staff participating in this intervention did not regard it as part of their personal development programme. Leana and Rousseau (2000) go on to explain that many organisations in this century are more likely to pursue a strategy of low-commitment rather than high-involvement HR resource commitment, which in the current economic climate could translate to less time and resources being available for continuous development programmes.

Bias due to demand characteristics may have occurred and could explain the lack of significance within the results, (Robson 1993). The members of staff knew that certain things were expected of them and they were expected to co-operate but their responses to the questionnaire could have been as a result of a desire to be seen in a better light.

With regard to the measures used in this study i.e. the measurement of the PCs of senior managers at two separate points in time, it would be useful, on another occasion, to measure something that is closer to the input i.e. resilience, which was the subject of the intervention. Additionally, how the PC is affected as a result would provide useful secondary evidence. Increasing the study longitudinally and measuring at more time points would also prove useful.

Additionally, some researchers Cohen (1988, 1992) as cited in Field and Hole (2003) suggest that the probability of failing to detect a genuine effect in an experiment is 0.2; therefore the probability of detecting an effect is the opposite i.e. $1 - 0.2 = 0.8$ or 80% (statistical power).

Using a statistical calculator and assuming:

Alpha level = 0.05

Number of independent variables = 1

Anticipated effect size = 0.15

Statistical power level = 0.8

Therefore a sample size of 54 is suggested as necessary to detect an effect.

Rousseau and Tijoriwala (1998) make the case that radical shifts in the nature of work create challenges for studying PCs in transition. They state that the context that the PC exists in has a bearing on the outcome and that quantitative, standardised contract measures are robust in the face of some changes but less so in what Golembiewski, Billingsley and Yeager (1976), cited in Rousseau and Tijoriwala (1998) refer to as 'gamma change'. They describe 'gamma change' as a significant change, (such as an impending merger) that is happening to an organisation. In order to fully assess the idiosyncrasies that exist in the mutual obligations between the individual and the organisation and the subsequent effects on individuals' PCs, qualitative measures are required. Weiss (2008), cited in Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2008) develops the above theme and suggests that a quantitative approach could be adopted and followed up with qualitative work to understand the pattern in the data, which would have been done in this study if time constraints had not existed and if access to the participants on a second occasion on a face-to-face basis had been possible. Given the significant nature

of such a 'gamma change' this may have an overriding influence on the PC thus neutralising the effect of an OD intervention.

Shield (2002) suggests that evaluation of major organisational changes, such as merger is recommended and that clear and measurable objectives are required across all areas including clinical, financial, organisational and morale issues. This evaluation can be obtained from HR surveys, turnover figures, satisfaction surveys etc. Therefore it follows that an evaluation strategy of OD interventions should be developed in the early stages i.e. before the intervention takes place to become fully aware of the variety of salient outcome criteria that may need to be measured (Birdi, 2006,2010). It would be beneficial to adopt McGregor's (2009) model, as described above to ensure transfer of learning to the workplace at later stages i.e. one to two months after and six or nine months after the intervention. This evaluation will provide useful information that forms a feedback loop and determines whether there is a return on investment and if planned organisational goals have been achieved.

In 2002, Cortvriend discusses what impact organisational change has on staff working within the NHS. She reports that when staff were asked directly about the effects of work place changes, most people stated that they remained very loyal and committed to the NHS. It is likely that the above findings can be compared with the current study as the Cortvriend (2002) study took place in another time of radical change following New Labour's drive to devolve healthcare to primary care providers. It could be suggested that some staff within the NHS who typically have many year's service are numbed to change. In this recessional climate, individuals may feel lucky to have a job and therefore feel they have limited choices available to them and will be reluctant to breach their PC.

Briner (2010) suggests that the mapping of individuals' emotion is possibly related to incongruent methods of assessment and that it is probably not possible for participants to rate emotional experiences after they've occurred but are taken to accurately represent what was experienced at the time. So how the individuals were feeling on the day that they completed the questionnaire did not reflect how they felt some time ago in the work place, which provides further support for evaluation at more time points to fully understand how successful an intervention has been.

Conclusion

This study provides excellent grounding on which to base further studies. Based on the above findings, it would be useful to overcome the above mentioned limitations by utilising a bigger participant sample size from all levels within the organisation that have taken part in a number of different OD interventions, including mentoring, coaching, secondments etc and for data to be analysed longitudinally and at more time points.

The PC is according to Shield (2002) a potential indicative factor of the success of mergers and should be considered as a useful gauge of how balanced the relationship is between what an employee's expectations are, what the organisation will provide and what he owes the organisation – the greater the

matching of expectations from employee and employer, the more likely employers will observe increased job satisfaction, productivity and reduced turnover and employees will experience positive psychological well-being because they feel committed to the organisation, experience job security, motivation and job satisfaction.

Robinson and Rousseau (1994) suggest that the challenge for contemporary management facing economic and organisational changes is to keep changes in employment conditions that affect individuals' PCs from becoming violations.

References

Benson, G. S., (2006) Employee Development, commitment and intention to turnover: a test of employee practices in action. *Human Resource Management Journal*, 16, 2, 173-192.

Birdi, K. (2006). Evaluating effectiveness: The taxonomy of training and development outcomes (TOTADO). Presented at CBPOT 2, Brasilia, Brazil.

Breakwell, G. & Millward, L. (1995) *Basic Evaluation Methods Analysing Performance, Practice & Procedure*. Leicester: BPS Books.

Brewerton, P., & Millward, L. (2001) *Organizational Research Methods*.

Chand, K. (2011), NHS reforms are this government's poll tax. *Guardian.co.uk JOEPUBLIC Blog* 12 January. Available at:
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/society/joepublic/2011/jan/31/nhs-reforms-poll-tax?INTCMP=ILCNETTXT3487> Accessed 27.2.11

Cortvriend, P. (2002) *Living through Organisational Change: The Experiences of NHS Staff*. Manchester: University of Manchester

Burke, M.J., & Day, R. R., (1986) A Cumulative Study of the Effectiveness of Managerial Training. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 71, 232-245.

Conway, N. & Briner, R. B., (2005) *Understanding Psychological Contracts at Work*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Field, A., & Hole, G., (2003) *How to Design and Report Experiments*, London: Sage Publications Ltd.

Fife-Schaw, C., Breakwell, G., Hammond., & S., Smith, J., (1995) *Research Methods in Psychology*. Third Edition. London: Sage Publications Ltd.

Gaertner, K., & Nollen, S. D., (1989) Career Experiences, Perceptions of Employment Practices, and Psychological Commitment to the Organization, *Human Relations*, 42, 11, 975-991

Guest, C., & Conway, N., (1997) *Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development Issues in People Management – Employee Motivation and the*

Psychological Contract. London: Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development.

Guest, D., & Conway, N., (2002) Chartered Institute Of Personnel and Development. Pressure at Work and the Psychological Contract. London: Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development.

Hesse-Biber, S., & Leavy, P., (2008) Handbook of Emergent Methods, New York: Guilford Press.

Jacobs, R., & Warrington, C., (2003). Employee Development and Organizational Performance: a review of literature and directions for future research. Human Resource Development International, 6, 3, 343-354.

Johnson, M., (2004) The New Rules of Engagement Life-Work Balance and Employee Commitment, London: Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development.

Kirkpatrick, D., (1959) Techniques for evaluating training programs. Journal for the American Society for Training and Development, 13, 3-9.

Leana, C. R., & Rousseau, D. M., (2000) Relational Wealth, New York: Oxford University Press.

McGregor, M., Carter, A. J., Straw, R., & Birdi, K. (2009) Evaluation of training and development: an opportunity for a systems review. AWWOPinPractice, 3.

Meyer, J., & Allen, N. (1997). Commitment in the Workplace: Theory, Research and Application. London: Sage Publications Ltd.

Mitchell, M., & Jolley, J. (2010). Research Design Explained. US: Wadsworth Publishing.

Moore, K. A., & Cooper, C. L., (1996) Stress in Mental Health Professionals: a theoretical overview. International Journal of Social Psychiatry 42, 150-159. Available at:

<http://isp.sagepub.com/content/42/2/82> Accessed 7.3.11

Mowday, R. T., Steers, R. M., & Porter, L. W., (1979). The Measurement of Organizational Commitment, Journal of Vocational Behaviour, 14, 224-247.

Pate, J., Martin, G., & McGoldrick, J., (2003). The impact of psychological contract violation on employee attitudes and behaviours. Employee Relations, 25, 6, 557-573.

Robertson, I. T., & Cooper, C. L., (2010) Full engagement: the integration of employee engagement and psychological well-being. Leadership and Organisational Development Journal, 32, 4, 324.

Robinson, S. L., & Rousseau, D., (1994) Violating the psychological contract: not the exception but the norm, *Journal of Organisational Behaviour*, 15, 245-259.

Robson, C., (1995) *Real World Research*, Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.

Rousseau, D. M., & Greller, M. M., (1994) Human Resource Practices: administrative contract makers, *Human Resource Management*, 33, 3, 385-402.

Rousseau, D., & Schalk. R., (2000). *Psychological contracts in employment: Cross-national perspectives*. London: Sage Publications Ltd.

Rousseau, D. M., & Tijoriwala, S. A., (1998) Assessing psychological contracts: issues, alternatives and measures. *Journal of Organisational Behaviour*, 19 S1, 679-695.

Taris, T., & Kompier, M., (2003) Challenges of longitudinal designs in occupation health psychology. *Scandinavian Journal of Work, Environment and Health*, 29, 1-4.

Shield, R., (2002) *Hospital Mergers and Psychological Contracts: Developing a Critical Realist Approach*. Manchester Metropolitan University Business School Working Paper Series (Online).

Shield, R., Thorpe, R., & Nelson, A., (2002) Hospital mergers and psychological contracts. *Strategic Change*. 11, 7, 357-367. Available at: <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/jsc.611/pdf> Accessed 8.3.11

Triggle, N., (2010, 17 July) NHS 'to undergo radical overhaul' BBC News Online. Available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/10557996> Accessed 27.2.11.