

**Exploring the experience of the mentee-  
mentor psychological contract in the  
employment relationship: A case study**

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## **Comments**

- ~ The American Psychological Association (APA) Publication Manual (sixth edition) was used for this dissertation.
- ~ The dissertation is submitted in the form of two research articles, comprising of chapter two and three.

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## **Chapter 1: Introduction, problem, and objectives**

Chapter one comprises the introduction, problem statement, and objectives of this research study as presented and accepted by the North-West University on 20 April 2018.

### **Key words**

Lived experience, psychological contract, anticipatory psychological contract, organisation, business, mentees, mentoring, employment expectation, pre-entry expectations

## **Introduction**

Over the last few decades, considerable attention has been given to the development and management of the psychological contract amongst proactive organisations that want to stay competitive (Abu-Doleh & Hammou, 2015; Restubog, Bordia, Tang, & Krebs, 2010; Rousseau, 2011; Rousseau, 2005; Suazo, Martinez & Sandoval, 2009; Tomprou, & Nikolaou, 2011). The psychological contract can be defined as a perceptual exchange agreement between two parties regarding mutually beneficial obligations that each party has towards the other in the employment relationship (Bal & Rousseau, 2016; Rankin, Roberts, & Schöer, 2014; Sparrow & Cooper, 2003). The debate of professionals garnering the credibility and legal nature of the psychological contract (Fisk, 2010; Guest & Conway, 2004) eventually found agreement that the experience of the psychological contract is intended to be mutually beneficial for both the employer and employee (Rankin, Roberts, & Schöer, 2014; Rousseau, 2003; Weinberg, 2009) thereby generating a fair and trusting environment for an individual to grow if managed correctly (Guest & Conway, 2004; Conway & Briner, 2005).

Traditionally, psychological contract research focussed on a give and take agreement between two parties regarding mutually beneficial obligations that each party has towards the other in the employment relationship (Rankin, Roberts, & Schöer, 2014; Rousseau, 1989; Sparrow & Cooper, 2003). The psychological contract is influenced by the employees' perception of organisations that deliver or fail to deliver promised inducements and their perception of what they owe the company in return (De Ruiter, Schalk, Schaveling, & Van Gelder, 2017; Rousseau, 2011), thereby reinforcing the importance of a mutually beneficial obligatory relationship between the employer and the employee. The current global environment may affect the future employment relationship by changing and adapting employment as employees' perceptions and expectations regarding the employment relationship has changed (Abu-Doleh & Hammou, 2015; Schalk & Freese, 2000).



Employees' perceptions and expectations that matures into a psychological contract occurring between the employer and employee (Rousseau, 2003; Weinberg, 2009) as a psychological contract's foundation is based upon pillars of trust, fairness, and service delivery (Rousseau, Hornung, & Kim, 2009) which, in turn, positively affects employee performance (Guest, 2004; Guest & Conway, 2004). Leading one to conclude that global competitive changes are steering more and more modern organisations, which are committed to the well-being and development of their employees, to provide a balance between organisational demands and employee demands via the experience of the psychological contract as the way a psychological contract is perceived by the employee could ultimately affect business success.

New employees sign contracts and policies to join the organisation and in doing so expectations are developed of each other (Alcover, Martínez-Iñigo, & Chambel, 2012; Bellou, 2009; Alcover, *et al.*, 2016). The new employee also goes through a process of forming a verbal and/or tacit agreement that form part of a psychological contract (Rousseau, 2011; Rousseau, 2005) that is influenced, amongst other things, by the employee's involvement and participation in the formation of a psychological contract (Linde & Gresse, 2014). The aforementioned mutually beneficial relationship may refer to the mentee relationship that traditionally developed between a mentor and a mentee of unequal status that had a developmental focus (Bozionelos *et al.*, 2016). It is this small number of mentees that is of interest due to the possibility that this organisational mentee group will continue to grow in the future in order to stay ahead of growing economic pressure such as the rapidly increasing unemployment figures (National Planning Commission, n.d.; Statistics South Africa, 2017) and declining job opportunities in South Africa (Peyper, 2017; Statistics South Africa, 2017).

### **Problem statement**

From the aforementioned literature it is clear that the psychological contract is subjective and depends on the employee or in this case the mentee's way of thinking regarding the specific employer obligations that an employer must fulfil (Bellou, 2009; Freese & Schalk, 2011;

Rousseau, 2011; Rousseau, 2005). It is important to recognise, as Zhao et al. (2007) pointed out, that work attitudes such as job satisfaction and turnover intentions play an integral part in how the psychological contract is managed as lowered employee organisational commitment is likely when contract breach occurs.

Fisk (2010, p. 102) suggested rising excessive employee entitlement in organisations as a cause of counterproductive work behaviour due to an “I want it all and I want it now!” Attitude amongst entry level employees. A mentoring development programme will be integral to developing future leaders, though it was speculated that other employees might perceive mentees in the programme to come off as entitled (Fisk, 2010). Therefore, given the importance of the psychological contract in the workplace (Abu-Doleh & Hammou, 2015; Gresse, 2012; Linde & Gresse, 2014; Zhao et al., 2007), the organisation needs to manage this anticipatory psychological contract effectively to prevent perceived psychological contract breach (De Ruiter et al., 2017) that may lead to mentee mistrust (Zhao et al., 2007) and counterproductive work behaviour (Jensen, Opland, & Ryan, 2009) which may have an impact on the management of labour relations within the mentoring programme and ultimately the organisation (Gresse, 2012; Linde & Gresse, 2014; Miller, 2015; Miller & Konopaske, 2014).

The psychological contract can be influenced by the mentee’s pre-entry expectations (Linde & Gresse, 2014; Linde & Schalk, 2006) and assumptions of what the organisation has promised for the mentee’s commitment to the programme (Freese & Schalk, 2011; Schalk & Roe, 2007) and as mentees were hand-picked to be part of a mentoring programme they were inadvertently identified as the future leaders in the organisation. Leading one to conclude that it is essential to manage these pre-entry expectations that will impact organisational deliverables (Campbell, Bonacci, Shelton, Exline, & Bushman, 2010) specifically to the mentee programme and labour relations management.

In bridging the disconnect between the above mentioned concepts, Hassell (2016) proposed the notion that in order for an organisation to thrive, dynamic strategies need to be developed for

developing future star employees and/or mentees. Therefore, this study aimed to identify how to practically manage the formulation of a mentee-mentor psychological contract in an organisation in order to effectively promote and retain individuals identified as '*people with potential*' (Taylor & Harrison, 2016).

Managing mentee expectations more effectively is essential in order to better manage the psychological contract in the workplace (Eilam-Shamir & Yaakobi, 2014; Rofcanin, Berber, Koch, & Sevinc, 2015). A better understanding of managing these expectations, could provide insightful information to the organisation (for example: in managing mentee job expectations and the relationship between mentees and those they report to) should a mentee's perception of the psychological contract indeed be determined by a mentee's expectations (Gresse, 2012; Linde & Gresse, 2014).

### **Paradigmatic perspective**

Research paradigms are belief frameworks or worldviews that takes place within research and researchers work within the aforementioned world view (Creswell, 2007). Therefore, this study will ask the mentees how they experience the mentoring programme overall. Qualitative research requires a set of paradigms that serve as the foundation for research methods; the qualitative research paradigm would include the basic assumptions, beliefs, and values surrounding science and how scientific research should be carried out and applied (Guba & Lincoln, 1994).

Creswell (2007) and Guba and Lincoln (1994) stated that research paradigms consists of three aspects, namely: ontology (nature of reality); epistemology (the relationship assumptions between the researcher and participants); and methodology (methods of gathering data).

Therefore, the research paradigm for this study was interpretative by incorporating human interest into a study (Vosloo, 2014) relying on the authenticity and trustworthiness of the research participants answers in order to understand people better (Neuman, 2011).

Interpretivism was used for this study as it is shaped by the mentees' perceptions and the researcher's values and motivations (Neuman, 2011; Rubin & Babbie, 2011).

## **Research motivation and objectives**

### **Research motivation**

The psychological contract focusses on a give and take agreement between two parties regarding mutually beneficial obligations that each party has towards the other in the employment relationship (Rousseau, 2011). It is also influenced by the employees' perception of organisations that deliver or fail to deliver promised incentives and their perception of what they owe the company in return (De Ruiter, Schalk, Schaveling, & Van Gelder, 2017; Rousseau, 2011). The research motivation was therefore reinforced by the importance of a mutually beneficial obligatory employment relationship between mentees and mentors as a successful mentoring programme would rely on a give and take relationship between the mentee and the mentor.

### **Research objectives**

This research study consisted of general objectives and specific objectives.

#### **General objectives**

The psychological contract experienced by mentees is complex and broad, affecting the Psychological contract's contents, the mentoring programme, as well as employment relations within the organisation. As a result, this study recognised that research has proven that the psychological contract exists and that there are many contracts. Therefore, the general objective of this study was to explore the experience of the mentee-mentor psychological contract as part of the mentee's employment relationship.

#### **Specific objectives**

##### *Article 1*

To explore the mentee's lived experience of the mentee-mentor psychological contract.

Based on this secondary objective, the following research propositions were made:

Proposition 1<sub>a</sub>: A unique mentee-mentor psychological contract exists within a formal organisational mentoring programme.

Proposition 1b: Unique perceived expectations and obligations are experienced by the mentee in the mentoring programme.

## *Article 2*

To explore the experience of the mentee-mentor psychological contract on the mentee's perceived employment relationship and future (anticipatory) psychological contracts. Based on this secondary objective, the following research hypotheses were made:

Hypothesis 1: The mentee experiences a unique employment relationship in the organisation.

Hypothesis 2: The mentee-mentor psychological contract influences the mentee's perceived employment relationship.

Hypothesis 3: The mentee expects a unique future employment relationship, due to being part of the current mentee-mentor relationship.

Hypothesis 4: The mentee expects the future psychological contract to be based on the current mentee-mentor psychological contract.

## **Research method**

### **Research approach**

A phenomenological research approach using a qualitative research design tailored to an existing mentoring programme was used as it provided a more holistic understanding of the research problem (Creswell, 2012; Creswell, Hanson, Plano Clark, & Morales, 2007) by collecting data concurrently and analysing it separately (Wittink, Barg, & Gallo, 2006).

Therefore, a mixed method research design was used for this study, with a qualitative research approach used for *Article 1* and a quantitative research approach used for *Article 2* by collecting data through an online questionnaire on QuestionPro (QuestionPro., 2018; Seymour, 2012). A case study was proposed as it refers to an intensive examination of a small group of people or a single business unit (Longhofer, Floersch, & Hartmann, 2017). The same population sample of mentors and mentees in a formal organisational mentoring programme was used for

both articles with a larger sample used from the same population for *Article 2* (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011).

### **Research design**

A case study design in a single organisational business unit was used as it will directly add to the relevance of the lived experience of a mentee by investigating whether a mentee's perception of the mentee-mentor psychological contract is related to their existing and future employment relationship (Allen et al., 2009; Wittink, Barg, & Gallo, 2006).

### **Research procedure**

Firstly, written permission was obtained from the Human Resource Executive in charge of the mentoring programme. Permission included the objectives and propositions of the proposed research study, as well as assurances that the data will not be disclosed to unauthorised parties (King College London, 2011). The questions that were asked of the mentee was viewed and analysed from the mentees' and mentors' perspectives from a holistic approach to study the mentee in a culture, group, and natural setting to ascertain how they viewed the mentee-mentor psychological contract and their experiences of their current and future employment relationships (Allen et al., 2009).

The research focus was mainly on the mentees and each question examined from their perspective. It was anticipated that certain aspects of the organisational mentoring programme will be challenged: such as the way the mentee-mentor psychological contract formulation and interpretation were handled from the onset of the mentoring programme.

The research process began in the first quarter of the 2018 mentoring programme and was limited to no more than 55 subjects at one organisation's mentoring programme due to the time constraints involved in collecting and analysing data. A gatekeeper was used to explain the purpose of the research to participants that form part of a national South African organisation's mentoring and they were asked to complete an online questionnaire on QuestionPro (QuestionPro., 2018).

## **Research participants**

The goal of this study was to collect data from mentees and mentors in mentoring programmes, males and females that represented the age and employment equity demographic of the population by focussing on how mentees perceived the lived experience of the mentee-mentor psychological contract, as part of the mentee's employment relationship. A small sample of 55 participants was used for *Article 1* and a larger sample of 101 participants was used for *Article 2* to gather as much data as possible for the questionnaires from mentees in the 2015-2018 mentoring programme (Breen, 2016) to add a unique perspective on subthemes identified in collected questionnaire data.

### **Inclusion criteria**

This case study included mentees and mentors from the 2015-2018 mentoring programme pool as the programme was more structured.

### **Exclusion criteria**

This case study excluded mentees and mentors that participated in the mentoring programme prior to 2015 as the mentoring programme was informal and not as structured.

## **Instrumentation**

### **Case study questions**

For this case study, a thematic analysis was used to pinpoint, examine and record themes within qualitative data (Javadi & Zarea, 2016). Atlas.ti will then be used to identify action words from data collection and data analysis, create codes and extrapolate global themes and from there subthemes (Atlasti.com, 2017). Research participants were asked to complete an online questionnaire on QuestionPro (QuestionPro., 2018) and printed versions of the questionnaire for those individuals not able to complete online. After completion, the printed versions were added to QuestionPro by the researcher. The questionnaires were designed to test the psychological contract of mentees (the perceived expectations held by the mentee). The questions for this case study were designed to tap into the phenomenon of the psychological contract and bring to mind

responses related to psychological contract global themes. The qualitative questionnaire for *Article 1* included the following open ended questions and statements from the mentee and mentor as seen in Annexure A (p. 81):

*Promises made to the mentee*

1<sub>a</sub> Please give a short description of promises you think that your mentor made to you (e.g., “to give me advice when I need it”).

*Promises made by the mentee*

2<sub>a</sub> Please give a short description of promises you think you made to your mentor (e.g., “to give me advice when I need it”).

*Promises made to the mentor*

1<sub>b</sub> Please give a short description of promises you think that your mentee made to you (e.g., “to ask for advice when he/she needed it”).

*Promises made by the mentor*

2<sub>b</sub> Please give a short description of promises you think you made to your mentee (e.g., “to give you advice when you need it”).

The quantitative questionnaire for *Article 2* included Likert-scale type questions from the mentee and mentor as seen in Annexure C (p. 96) and Annexure D (p. 100).

Once permission’s received from the company, a session was held to ensure that the researcher and gatekeeper both understand the information and how to collect it. As participants were aware of the researcher’s professional role in the organisation, the participant sample was recruited using a gatekeeper to explain the research, to explain what the research was used for, as well as to explain that information was kept anonymously and confidential as each participant were given a code. The gatekeeper then assured that the participants answered the questions freely without undue influence (King College London, 2011).

By completing the online questionnaire on QuestionPro, the participants gave their consent for both their participation and using their information in the research (QuestionPro., 2018). The



questionnaire used global themes to identify subthemes to explore and further elaborate on the subthemes by exploring the experience of mentee-mentor psychological contract on the mentee's perceived employment relationship and future (anticipatory) psychological contracts (Breen, 2006).

### **Case study report**

A single case study provided the researcher the opportunity to explore problems, issues, and relationships of a small group of people (Longhofer, Floersch, & Hartmann, 2017). In the case study report, the mentoring programme system was documented; data collected when the mentees met at the organisation's head office to meet their mentors; and data analysed using Atlas.ti (Atlasti.com., 2017).

### **Data collection**

#### **Literature review**

After collecting data, a literature review was used to elaborate on the global themes and identified subthemes. In *Article 1*, the psychological contract, mentors and mentees in the mentoring programmes were elaborated on; and in *Article 2*, a literature review was conducted on the anticipatory psychological contract and the mentee's future employment relations to further explain the collected data and results.

The literature review focussed on journal articles, academic books, and online databases such as EbscoHost, PsycArticles, PsycInfo, SAePublications, and Sage Journals Online. The result of the aforementioned should provide a fresh and more holistic picture of the lived experience of being a mentee during the formulation of a psychological contract. It was anticipated that organisations will be able to use the findings to develop mentoring programmes and recruit mentees that have the potential to succeed in the organisation.

More importantly, a better understanding of this relationship, could provide insightful information to the organisation, the relationship between mentees and those they report to.

## **Data analysis**

The researcher used a thematic analysis using Atlas.ti in order to identify action words from data collection and data analysis, create codes and extrapolate global themes and from there, organisational themes. The results were then revealed in two research articles.

## **Data quality**

Within qualitative research, adequate and detailed information and descriptions of the content factors influencing the study needs to be given as well as a detailed description of the fieldwork location in order to convince the reader that transferability is possible due to similar circumstances (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Therefore, the study processes were transparent as transferability relied on full disclosure of the study in order for the reader to determine if transferability is possible (Patton, 1999). A mixed method research was used to ensure data quality (Seymour, 2012) with a qualitative case study in *Article 1* to ensure the best understanding of what matters to mentees, their perceptions of things (Longhofer, Floersch, & Hartmann, 2017; Longhofer, Floersch, & Hoy, 2013); as well as a quantitative study in *Article 2* thereby ensuring data quality.

## **Process of obtaining informed consent**

### **Permission and informed consent**

Informed consent is needed for research distribution to ensure that research does not create unnecessary stress (Flick, 2009). Participants were provided with an online consent form informing them of the research particulars and that the decision to participate in and/or withdraw from this study was entirely up to the participant as the participant may refuse to take part in the study at any time without affecting their relationship with the study researcher or the mentoring programme. The participants were assured that the decision to withdraw from the study should not result in any loss or benefits to which the participant are entitled to and the participant has the right not to answer any single question, as well as to withdraw completely from the research (Knox & Burkard, 2009).

### **Anonymity**

The study respected the anonymity of participants by informing participants that their data will be shared with and treated with confidentiality and impartiality by ensuring that personal information is secure and restricted and stored in a safe place with the use of a code (American Psychological Association, 2010; Knox & Burkard, 2009). Anonymity was ensured through anonymous questionnaires on QuestionPro (Knox & Burkard, 2009) by allocating a code to each participant to ensure anonymity both within the internal audience of the host company and outside (QuestionPro., 2018). The QuestionPro links were sent out by the gatekeeper to the participants' e-mail addresses.

### **Confidentiality**

The researcher works in human resources and potential research participants may have been aware of the researcher's professional role, as such, care was taken that there was no perceived pressure to participate in the research study.

In order to minimise participant stress over the researcher's professional role in the study, a gatekeeper will be used to explain the research and voluntary participation will be enforced by ensuring participants that they can withdraw at any time without explanation. The aforementioned lessened the risk if the researcher's professional obligations were tested during the course of the research, which fell outside researcher's obligations as participants were informed that they have the right to ask that data may be destroyed or withdrawn (Haverkamp, 2005; Knox & Burkard, 2009).

### **Ethical considerations**

To ensure that participant pressure did not happen, informed consent through a signed consent form was needed by making participants aware that they will get the opportunity to consider the research information (such as the length of research, methodology, participant privacy, study benefits) and ask questions regarding any uncertainty they experienced with participation (Flick, 2007; Kirkengen & Thornquist, 2012).

In order to minimise participant stress over the researcher's professional role in the study, a gatekeeper was used to explain the research and voluntary participation enforcement by ensuring participants that they can withdraw at any time without explanation. The aforementioned lessened the risk if the researcher's professional obligations are tested during the course of the research, which falls outside researcher obligations as participants were also informed that they have the right to ask that data may be destroyed or withdrawn (Haverkamp, 2005; Knox & Burkard, 2009).

Finally, potential participant harm were avoided during the study as participants were informed that research data were not used to impact their daily lives thereby assuring participants that their safety and well-being were secured throughout this study (Kirkengen & Thornquist, 2012).

### **Anticipatory contributions of the study**

This study added to the field of mentoring programmes and related areas of study such as labour relations and organisational studies at a theoretical as well as implementation level. Insight into a formal mentoring programme contributed towards the organisation's knowledge. It illuminated whether a unique mentee-mentor psychological contract exists which added insight to the organisation as to how to implement the mentoring programme, and, with improvements to the mentoring programme, to the individual. This study also contributed towards industrial relations as a scientific field by generating further knowledge and an understanding of a unique mentee-mentor psychological contract which may create a framework to implement more sustainable employment relationships. Insight into a unique mentee-mentor psychological contract will assist with developing strategies for the organisation to develop strategies to retain 'people with potential' within the organisation, especially to prepare themselves to retain the aforementioned individuals. Potentially, the individuals involved in the mentoring programme were able to better form future employment relationships.

## **Chapter compilation and proposed timeframe**

The chapter compilation in this dissertation were as follows:

Proposed thesis submission:	January 2019
Chapter 1: Research proposal	15 February 2018
Chapter 2: Article 1 To explore the mentee's lived experience of the mentee-mentor psychological contract.	July 2018
Chapter 3: Article 2 To explore the experience of the mentee-mentor psychological contract on the mentee's perceived employment relationship and future (anticipatory) psychological contracts	November 2018
Chapter 4: Conclusions, summary, limitations and recommendations	December 2018

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## **Chapter 2: Exploring the mentee's lived experience of the mentee-mentor psychological contract**

Chapter 2 (Article 1) will be submitted for revision and publication in the South African Journal of Human Resource Management. APA referencing style will continue.

### **Key words**

Lived experience, psychological contract, anticipatory psychological contract, organisation, business, mentees, mentoring, employment expectation, pre-entry expectations

## **Abstract**

**Orientation:** Increasing organisational uncertainty has resulted in a more dynamic working environment, prompting organisations to develop strategies to appeal to and retain people identified as *‘people with potential’*.

**Research purpose:** This explorative study focussed on the interaction between mentees and mentors (mentees’ and mentors’ perceptions of both their own expectations and obligations) to determine whether a unique mentee-mentor psychological contract existed between a mentee and mentor in a formal mentoring programme.

**Motivation for the study:** Expanding on psychological contract theory by exploring whether a unique mentee-mentor psychological contract exists within a formal organisational mentoring programme by focussing on unique perceived mentee and mentor expectations and obligations.

**Research approach/design, and method:** 31 mentors and 55 mentees within the automotive industry were asked to complete an online open-ended qualitative questionnaire. 14 mentors and 41 mentees responded indicating a 64% participation rate. Coding and thematic analyses extrapolated global themes and sub-themes.

**Main findings:** The results confirmed that the expectations and obligations of the two parties interact, mentee expectations turn into mentor obligations vis-à-vis mentee obligations turned into mentor expectations. This interaction indicated that an exchange agreement occurred between the parties indicating a unique mentee-mentor psychological contract.

**Practical/Managerial implications:** The existence of a unique mentee-mentor psychological contract enabled organisations to better understand and manage mentee expectations, which provided insightful information to the organisation and potentially enable organisations to retain *‘people with potential’*.

**Contributions:** Although the psychological contract has been studied in detail, it has not focussed on the dyadic mentee-mentor relationship.

## **Key words**

Lived experience, psychological contract, anticipatory psychological contract, organisation, business, mentees, mentors, mentoring, mentoring expectations

## **Introduction**

Increasing organisational uncertainty, due to labour market mobility and continuing changes in organisations such as work processes impact the relationships between employees and employers (Alcover, Rico, Turnley, & Bolino, 2016; Cascio & Aguinis, 2008; Jafri, 2011). Employees are assets for organisations and, as such, organisational success rely on healthy employee-employer relationships (Abu-Doleh & Hammou, 2015); concomitantly, the aforementioned organisational uncertainty results in endless possibilities existing for employees that impact their social interactions leading organisations to adapt their employee retention strategies and work processes (Cascio & Aguinis, 2008; Helfat *et al.*, 2007; Schreyögg & Sydow, 2010).

Hence, the interest in the social exchange concept of the psychological contract (Alcover, Martinez-Inigo, & Chambel, 2012; Bordia, Restubog, Bordia, & Tang, 2017; Sherman & Morley, 2015) as it is a way for an organisation to understand and, through that understanding, manage employee expectations and garner a better understanding of the employee-employer relationships within an organisation (Bal & Rousseau, 2016; Bozionelos *et al.*, 2016; Guest, Isaksson, & Witte, 2010).

In order for organisations to adapt their work strategies to retain employees, they need to first understand the exchange based relationships within their organisation (Alcover *et al.*, 2016; Alcover, Martinez-Inigo, & Chambel, 2012; Helfat *et al.*, 2007); as this allows the organisation to manage the exchange based relationships from both the organisation and the individual over time (Sherman & Morley, 2015). Therefore, the mentee-mentor exchange relationship was chosen for this study as mentees and mentors are important assets for an organisation as they were inadvertently identified as the future leaders in the organisation. Understanding and managing how both parties perceive the mentee-mentor exchange relationship will offer insights

into the psychological contract as it allows the organisation to identify how the mentee-mentor exchange relationships changes over time (Abu-Doleh & Hammou, 2015).

### **Psychological contract**

The psychological contract refers to a subjective reciprocal exchange agreement between individuals and their employer(s) (Bozionelos *et al.*, 2016; Rousseau, Hornung, & Kim, 2009; Zhao, Wayne, Glibkowski, & Bravo, 2007). This exchange based relationship focusses on the contributions that each party bring to the employee-employer relationship (Rousseau, 2011; Rousseau, 2005; Rousseau, 2001<sub>a</sub>; Rousseau, 2001<sub>b</sub>) and this relationship may be a) a short-term transactional based relationship that focusses on financial and material exchanges or b) a long-term relational based relationship that focusses on socio-emotional exchanges (Alcover, Martinez-Inigo, & Chambel, 2012).

The premise is that the psychological contract is created once an employee believes that an employer has made the employee a promise, whether explicit or implicit in exchange for the employee's skills contributions (Farnese, Livi, Barbieri, & Schalk, 2018). Psychological contracts therefore, govern how employees perceive their employee-employer exchange relationships (Gallani, Krishnan, Marinich, & Shields, 2015; Sherman & Morley, 2015; Solinger, Hofmans, Bal, & Jansen, 2015). Organisations need to know how to manage employee relationships as it affects behaviour and motivation which ultimately affects employee efforts and skills contributions (Farnese *et al.*, 2018; Solinger *et al.*, 2015).

### **Mentors and mentees**

Mentoring is defined as an evolving and developmental relationship between individuals of unequal status referred to as the mentee and the mentor (Bozionelos *et al.*, 2016; Sato, 2008). The mentoring relationship has been shown to play a pivotal role in a mentee's employability as those on the receiving end of mentor support was linked to better employability and job performance (Bozionelos *et al.*, 2016; Kram, 1985). Mentoring was also found to be linked to basic salary, promotions, and job satisfaction through career-related and psychosocial support



from the mentee's mentor (Allen, Eby, O'Brien, & Lentz, 2008; Allen, Eby, Poteet, Lentz, & Lima, 2004; Kram, 1985); leading one to conclude that the mentee-mentor relationship focusses on a mutually beneficial exchange agreement between the mentees and the mentors.

Literature has proven (Rousseau, 2011; Rousseau, 2005; Rousseau, 2001<sub>a</sub>; Rousseau, 2001<sub>b</sub>) that the psychological contract is formed during the recruiting phase and suggested that when an employee enters an employment relationship; the employee and employer develop expectations about the employment relationship (Bal & Rousseau, 2016; Rousseau, 2011; Rousseau, 2005; Rousseau, 2001<sub>a</sub>; Rousseau, 2001<sub>b</sub>). Thus an indicator that mentees and mentors form their expectations and obligations during this stage of the mentoring programme.

### **Perceived mentor and mentee expectations and obligations**

When employees begin a brand new job, they assess their experiences based on their expectations of that they think the job would be like and what they think the job ought to provide them in return (Sutton, & Griffin, 2004). Expectations refer to strong beliefs that someone will reach his/her goals or how someone should act and/or behave (Oxford Dictionary, 2018<sub>b</sub>). In contrast to the aforementioned, obligations refer to a more formal duty or commitment that someone is being bound to, either morally or legally (Oxford Dictionary, 2018<sub>c</sub>).

Psychological contract violation occurs if a mentee perceives that his or her perceived obligations have not been met (Bordia *et al.*, 2017; Rousseau, 2011). A gap exists in the lack of agreement on mentee-mentor relationship obligations, therefore, an open discussion on mentee-mentor obligations and expectations should occur between the mentee and the mentor (Bordia *et al.*, 2017; Dick, 2006). Thus, leading one to conclude that mentees and mentors will evaluate their experience of the mentee-mentor relationship by their own expectations of what the mentoring programme will provide them and what they will provide the mentoring programme in return.

### **Research problem**

Globalisation is the reality and it is becoming increasingly difficult to retain talent (Cascio & Aguinis, 2017), this uncertain reality has an impact on psychological contract formulation as the psychological contract is sensitive to internal and external stimuli (Rousseau, Hornung, & Kim, 2009; Rousseau, 2011). The aforementioned stimuli, may have a negative impact on the mentee's perceived expectations and obligations and initial psychological contract formulation and they may leave the organisation (Akhtar, Bal, & Long, 2016; Alcover, *et al.*, 2016; Alcover, Martinez-Inigo, & Chambel, 2012).

Therefore, organisations need to bridge the disconnect and this study proposed the notion that in order for an organisation to thrive, dynamic strategies need to be developed for developing future star employees and/or mentees (Hassell, 2016; Schalk, *et al.*, 2010; Van der Vaart, Linde, De Beer, & Cockeran, 2015). The information derived from this study should be relevant to organisations that want to retain their top talent.

### **Research aim**

The main aim of this study is focussed on identifying unique perceived mentee and mentor expectations and obligations to ascertain whether a unique mentee-mentor psychological contract exists within a formal organisational mentoring programme. This research is also aimed on identifying how to practically manage the formulation of a mentee-mentor psychological contract in an organisation in order to effectively promote and retain individuals identified as '*people with potential*' (Akhtar, Bal, & Long, 2016; Taylor & Harrison, 2016).

### **Research approach**

The study is explorative in nature and, as such, a phenomenological approach was used to explore the lived experience between mentees and mentors and derive meaning from human interaction(s). This approach would enable the researcher to better understand perceived mentee-mentor expectations and obligations from the parties' perspective within a specific environment (Creswell, Hanson, Plano Clark, & Morales, 2007; Smith & Osborn, 2015). In order to provide a

more holistic exploratory approach to the phenomenon, a qualitative research case study was used (Creswell, 2012; Creswell, Hanson, Plano Clark, & Morales, 2007; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011; QuestionPro., 2018) to identify global themes from the data and further analysed using coding to identify subthemes. The continuous focus of the research is on data collection, data coding, and data analysis (Smith & Osborn, 2015).

### **Research strategy**

First, permission had to be obtained from the Human Capital Executive to conduct the study and e-mail addresses had to be gathered from the organisation's mentoring programme director. Second, QuestionPro had to be contacted to gather their server IP address to ensure that the participating organisation's IT department would allow the questionnaires to go through their internal server network and not identify the questionnaires as spoofing. Third, two separate questionnaires consisting of two qualitative questions (Javadi & Zarea, 2016) catered to mentors and mentees were sent to the aforementioned gathered work e-mail addresses using an automated link sent from QuestionPro (QuestionPro, 2018). Tailored questionnaires as this study is explorative in nature and, as such, tailored QuestionPro questionnaires were sent out to mentees and mentors respectively as mentees and mentors may have different perceptions and interpretations of psychological contract expectations and obligations (Bal & Rousseau, 2015; Barnhill & Turner, 2014). Fourth, the aforementioned enabled the researcher to derive themes from the gathered data linked to mentee-mentor expectations and obligations (Trochim & Donnelly, 2008). Lastly, the data gathered was transcribed using thematic analysis and further coded into subthemes associated with perceived mentee and mentor expectations and obligations (Javadi & Zarea, 2016; QuestionPro, 2018).

### **Research method**

#### *Research setting and sampling*

In total, 31 mentors and 55 mentees within the automotive industry were asked to complete an online QuestionPro questionnaire. Of which, 14 mentors and 41 mentees responded indicating a

64% participation rate. The smaller mentor sample is attributed to a single mentor having to mentor more than one mentee at any given time (Allen, Eby, O'Brien, & Lentz, 2008; Allen, Eby, Poteet, Lentz, & Lima, 2004) especially in a formal organisational mentoring programme.

The mentors were generally managers that have been in the industry for a number of years with extensive field knowledge. The mentees were identified by the organisation as future leaders and were nominated to participate in the mentoring programme by top management and their peers. Participation in the study was completely voluntary to encourage participant honesty.

#### *Data collection method*

First, e-mail addresses were obtained from the organisation's mentoring programme director.

Then, permission had to be gained from the organisation's IT department to allow the

questionnaires to go through their internal network. Second, two separate questionnaires

consisting of two qualitative questions (Javadi & Zarea, 2016) catered to mentors and mentees

were sent to their work e-mail addresses using an automated link sent from QuestionPro

(QuestionPro, 2018). The two qualitative questions were designed to identify perceived mentee-mentor expectations and perceived mentee-mentor obligations:

1<sub>a</sub>) Promises and commitments which mentors sometimes make to their mentees (mentee expectations).

1<sub>b</sub>) Promises and commitments that mentees sometimes make to their mentor (mentee obligations).

2<sub>a</sub>) Promises and commitments which mentors think mentees make to them (mentor expectations).

2<sub>b</sub>) Promises and commitments that mentors sometimes make to their mentee(s) (mentor obligations).

The above mentioned questions were asked in order to establish whether a unique mentee-mentor psychological contract exists by asking participants to differentiate between their own perceived expectations of their mentor or mentee and what they perceive they've received from

their mentor or mentee. The mentees and the mentors were asked two questions based on the global themes expectations and obligations. For the global theme ‘expectations’, mentees were asked the following question: “*please give a short description of promises you think that your mentor made to you (e.g., to give me advice when I need it)*” and mentors were asked the following question: “*please give a short description of promises you think that your mentee made to you (e.g., "to ask for advice when he/she needed it")*.” For the global theme ‘obligations’, mentees were asked the following question: “*please give a short description of promised you think you made to your mentor (e.g. "to give me advice when I need it")*” and mentors were asked the following question: “*please give a short description of promises you think you made to your mentee (e.g., "to give you advice when you need it")*.”

#### *Data recording*

QuestionPro assigned a unique number to each participant (QuestionPro, 2018) and the answers of each participant for each question were analysed using Atlas.ti (Atlasti.com, 2017) and further analysed and grouped with colour coding to establish sub-themes. Responses were then grouped based on similarity (Stottok, Bergaus, & Gorra, 2011; Javadi & Zarea, 2016). Participant responses and research notes are stored online in QuestionPro under the researcher’s private account. Response analyses are kept electronically in the researcher’s private office, to which only the researcher has access.

#### *Data analysis*

To provide a more holistic understanding of the research phenomenon problem (Creswell, 2012; Creswell, Hanson, Plano Clark, & Morales, 2007); a phenomenological research approach was used as it collected data concurrently and analysed it separately (Wittink, Barg, & Gallo, 2006) using colour coding. Further, a unilateral perspective is more preferable as it’s the mentee’s and mentors’ individual belief regarding the mutual global themes of expectations and obligations that is of note (Coyle-Shapiro & Kessler, 2002; Freese & Schalk, 2008). The aforementioned

approaches would allow the mentee and the mentor to describe their perceived expectations and obligations as they experience it.

After collecting the data from the two global themes ‘expectations’ and ‘obligations’ the responses were further analysed and divided into subthemes based on similarity (Stottok, Bergaus, & Gorra, 2011; Javadi & Zarea, 2016). An example of this is when responses such as ‘offer support’ and ‘help me understand and know my team’ and ‘my mentor is available for advice and guidance’ are grouped under the subtheme ‘guidance’.

The study has to be trustworthy and reliable meaning that another researcher should be able to duplicate the results within a formal mentoring programme (Neuman, 2011; Rubin & Babbie, 2011).

#### *Data reporting*

The findings were reported separately for each research question and themes associated with perceived promises (expectations and obligations) were documented using colour coding and major themes identified.

#### **Thematic analysis and interpretation**

Tables detailing the thematic analysis and coding are attached in Annexure B (p. 82). Two global themes, namely expectations and obligations were identified and subthemes related to mentee and mentor obligations and mentee and mentor expectations were identified in order to prove or disprove the following propositions:

##### **Proposition 1a: A unique mentee-mentor psychological contract exists within a formal organisational mentoring programme**

The psychological contract is seen as a perceptual exchange agreement between two parties regarding mutually beneficial obligations that each party has towards one another in any given relationship (Bal & Rousseau, 2016; Rankin, Roberts, & Schöer, 2014; Sparrow & Cooper, 2003); for this study, the relationship refers to the mentee-mentor relationship. From the two qualitative questions, the following prominent expectations and obligations were identified:

*1a) Promises and commitments which mentors sometimes make to their mentees (mentee expectations)*

The following themes were identified by 41 mentees as prominent mentee expectations during the formulation of the psychological contract with their mentor:

*Guidance*

This code refers to a mentee seeking vocational advice or guidance from their mentor (a person in authority) in order to resolve an issue that they may have come across in their workspace (Merriam-Webster, 2018<sub>b</sub>). 46% of participating mentees indicated *guidance* as one of their mentee expectations. Notably, participant 21335523 expected that the mentor should “act as a resource and guide in the leadership journey, professional and personal life.” Mentee 21280811 expected the mentor to “provided assurance that she would guide me.” The subtheme guidance indicated that some mentees see a future relationship with their mentor as supported by mentee 21087681 with the following phrase “my mentor assured me that they would be available to me for advice and guidance even after the program, and whenever I needed, which to me was extremely valuable.”

*Availability*

This code refers to an expectation from the mentee that the mentor should be accessible and available (Dictionary.com, 2018) for one-on-one sessions. Availability may refer to a mentee needing the mentor to be available to give them advice and guidance. 29% of mentee participants indicated *availability* as one of their mentee expectations, participants 21087681 “he is always available for me if I need anything” and 21165528 “always available to talk and available to bounce questions off” indicated that the mentee expects the mentor to be a sounding board for problems that they may experience and use that experience to learn and grow.

*Support*

This code refers to an expectation from the mentee that the mentor should be helpful and supportive, possibly encouraging the mentee during their mentoring journey (Collins Dictionary,

2018b). 29% of mentee participants indicated *support* as one of their mentee expectations, mentee participants 21335523 "...and not to answer or solve my challenges but to offer support and guidance"; 20545634 "she will be supportive and give me advice when I need it"; and 21083562 "provide support when needed" indicated that they expect support from their mentor but that the mentee does not want to be coddled by the mentor. Mentee 21280811 indicated that mentor support should be long-term "be there every step of the three year program to help me succeed."

### *Advice*

This code refers to an opinion or suggestion that the mentor may give the mentee on what to do in a particular situation (Macmillan Dictionary, 2018a). Leading one to conclude that the mentee may or may not choose to do what the mentor advises. 15% of mentee participants indicated *giving advice* as one of their mentee expectations, mentee participants 21083562, 21043426, 20553888, and 21044816 "... offer and/or give advice." Notably, mentee participant 21039342 indicated that his mentor should provide both personal and professional growth "my mentor informed me that I could always contact him afterwards in order to ask for advice in order to become a better manager as well as person in general."

### *Development*

This code refers to an expectation from the mentee that the mentor should help them grow and develop over time (Collins Dictionary, 2018a). Especially as the mentor-mentee relationship may continue informally after the mentoring programme has finished (Allen, Eby, O'Brien, & Lentz, 2008; Allen, *et al.*, 2004; Kram, 1985). 12% of mentee participants indicated *development* as one of their mentee expectations, participant 21280811 indicated that the mentor should "provide enough opportunities to achieve all my competencies." Participants 21224934 "always there to discuss situations or areas for development" and 21039342 "... in order to become a better manager as well as person in general." Notably, the aforementioned mentee participants expected the mentor to help them grow both personally and professionally.



### *Honesty*

This code refers to a mentee seeking a truthful mentor, even if the criticism or advice they receive from the mentor is harsh (Vocabulary.com, 2018<sub>b</sub>). 10% of mentee participants indicated *honesty* as one of their mentee expectations; respondents 21224934 “to be open and honest”, 20545966 “to give me honest opinions and guidance”, and 21124672 “to be honest with me at all times.”

#### *1<sub>b</sub>) Promises and commitments that mentees sometimes make to their mentor (mentee obligations)*

The following themes were identified by 41 mentees as prominent mentee obligations during the formulation of the psychological contract with their mentor:

### *Commitment*

This code refers to the dedication that a mentee has towards their mentor, the level of dedicated mentor commitment that a mentee has towards their mentor influences their obligations whether large or small (Vocabulary.com, 2018<sub>a</sub>). 29% of mentee participants indicated *commitment* as one of their mentee obligations; participants 21280811, 21224934, 21044466, and 21264005 indicated commitment to the mentoring programme with responses like “commitment and dedication to do the program to the best of my ability” and “that I would not give up until I made it to where I would like to see myself. That I would not let any negativity distract me from my goals”. Whereas participants 21258945 and 20545618 indicated commitment to their goals and job roles with phrases such as “My commitment to my responsibilities on a daily basis...” and “... committed myself to achieving my goals.”

### *Honesty*

This code refers to a mentee being truthful with their mentor (Vocabulary.com, 2018<sub>b</sub>) during their one-on-one sessions. 24% of mentee participants indicated *honesty* as one of their obligations; notably participants 21335523, 20451133, 21087681, and 21039103 indicated that openness and honesty go hand in hand “To be open and honest.” With participant 21043426

going a step further by expecting the mentor to be open and honest in guiding the mentee with the phrase “to be open and honest with where I need to be guided.” Participant 21040519 “to always be honest, loyal and do everything to the best of my ability” and participant 20545634 “to be honest and ask any questions I may have no matter if I feel they are irrelevant or stupid.”

### *Openness*

This code refers to a mentee being open, transparent, and frank with their mentor (Longman Dictionary, 2018b) during their one-on-one sessions. This may refer to a willingness from the mentee to accept, even welcome criticism from their mentor. 17% of mentee participants indicated *openness* as one of their mentee obligations with the following responses: Openness is also closely linked to honesty as indicated by participants 21335523 and 20451133 and 21087681 and 21039103. Participants 21052458 “that I will be more open to bridging departments”, 20545618 “I promised to listen attentively and be open about my experiences”, and 20456175 “be open to criticism.” Suggested that how a mentee receives guidance, criticisms, advice, etc. is also important.

### *Dedication*

This code refers to a mentee obligation to dedicate their effort and time to the mentoring programme (Macmillan Dictionary, 2018b), to dedicate their hard work into the mentoring programme. This theme is closely linked to the perseverance or hardworking subtheme that 2% of mentee participants indicated. 10% of mentees indicated *dedication* as one of their obligations. Dedication on a personal, professional, and goal-orientated role as indicated by participants 21280811 “dedication to do the programme to my best ability. Provide high quality of work”, 21264005 “that I would not give up until I made it to where I would like to see myself. That I would not let any negativity distract me from my goals”, 21258945 “my commitment to my responsibilities on a daily basis...”, and 21008146 “I promised to take the program seriously by preparing for our meetings and tabling topics that I need guidance on.”

### *Advice*

This code refers to an opinion that the mentor may give the mentee on what to do in a particular situation (Macmillan Dictionary, 2018<sub>a</sub>). Leading one to conclude that the mentee may or may not choose to do what the mentor advises. 10% of mentees indicated *receiving mentor advice* as one of their obligations, it is noteworthy that how a mentee receives advice is also of importance as indicated by participants 21224934 “to listen to advice but also would like the opportunity to discuss differences”, 21165528 “I will receive the advice and decide when/how to use it”, 21044816 “advice and build relationships.”

From the above mentee expectations and obligations, *honesty* and *giving advice* are recurring themes for both mentee expectations and obligations. This may be related to expecting honest advice from the mentor and being honest to the mentor in return.

#### 2<sub>a</sub>) Promises and commitments which mentors think mentees make to them (mentor expectations)

The following were identified by 14 mentors as prominent mentor expectations as part of the formulation of the psychological contract:

### *Interest*

This code refers to a mentor expecting their mentee to be interested in the mentoring programme and show interest in asking questions and advice from their mentor and learning something during their one-on-one sessions (Longman Dictionary, 2018<sub>a</sub>). 29% of mentor participants indicated *mentee interest* as one of their mentor expectations. Leading one to tentatively suggest that the level of interest a mentee shows during their interactions would affect the level of mentor commitment. Responses from 21407846 “to be more proactive; more flexible; and ask more questions and listen”, and 21126796 “always ask when they are unsure”, 20499070 “To ask for clarity in all scenarios and to understand the big picture. This will assist the mentee in understanding what is required”, and 20451133 “if she needs to ask for advice or clarity on something, she will call me.”

### *Development*

This code refers to an expectation from the mentor that the mentee should learn and grow by using the skills learned from the mentoring experience (Collins Dictionary, 2018<sub>a</sub>). Especially as the mentor-mentee relationship may continue informally after the mentoring programme has finished (Allen, Eby, O'Brien, & Lentz, 2008; Allen, *et al.*, 2004; Kram, 1985). 21% of mentor participants indicated *development* as one of their expectations, with responses from participants 21165994 “to gain more insight into the business” and 20448719 “to be open and discuss their areas of development honestly.”

### *Honesty*

This code refers to a mentor being truthful with their mentee (Vocabulary.com, 2018<sub>b</sub>) during their one-on-one sessions. A further 21% of mentors indicated *honesty* as one of their mentor obligations; responses from participants 21230677 “to be frank, honest and open” and 21126796 “transparent at all time”. Most notably participant 20457398 indicated that admitting a lack of knowledge is considered the ultimate form of honesty with the response “... and not to be scared to admit that she knows less than her team on the technical skills of the job.”

### *Openness*

This code refers to a mentor being open, transparent, and frank with their mentee (Longman Dictionary, 2018<sub>b</sub>) during their one-on-one sessions. Two mentors namely participants 21230677 and 20448719 indicated *openness* as one of their obligations.

### *Guidance*

This code refers to a mentor seeking to guide but not lead their mentee in order to resolve an issue that they may have come across in their workspace (Merriam-Webster, 2018<sub>b</sub>). 14% of mentor participants indicated *guidance* as one of their expectations with responses such as the following from participants 20454987 “my mentee and I set goals individual at our first meeting and she has committed to working towards achieving the same through asking for guidance and coming up with solutions for us to explore” and participant 20499070 “to ask for clarity in all

scenarios and to understand the big picture. This will assist the mentee in understanding what is required.”

#### *Availability*

This code refers to an expectation from the mentor that the mentee should be available for their one-on-one sessions (Dictionary.com, 2018). Availability may refer to a mentor expecting that the mentee arrange their one-on-one sessions and showing up for them at the arranged time and prepared. Another 14% of mentor participants indicated *availability* as one of their mentor expectations, such as mentors 21017686 “I asked my mentees to contact me if they encountered anything that they believed I could add value in any way” and 20448719 “To stick to agreed meeting times, tasks, outcomes etc.”

#### 2<sub>b</sub>) Promises and commitments that mentors sometimes make to their mentee(s) (mentor obligations)

The following were identified by 14 mentors as prominent mentor obligations as part of the formulation of the psychological contract:

#### *Confidentiality*

This code refers to a mentor promising to keep the one-on-one sessions confidential and secret (Merriam-Webster, 2018<sub>a</sub>) by not revealing information that the mentee disclosed to them in confidence. 36% of mentor participants indicated *confidentiality* as one of their mentor obligations, such as mentor participants 21230972, 21230677, 21230677, and 20454605. Most notably, mentor 20451133 “our discussions will be open and honest, yet confidential”, implying that confidentiality is linked to honesty and openness.

#### *Availability*

This code refers to a promise from the mentor that the mentor to be available for their one-on-one sessions with their mentees (Dictionary.com, 2018). An indication that the mentor dedicates his valuable time and focus to the mentee. 36% of mentor participants indicated *availability* as one of their mentor obligations, mentor participants 21126796, 21022184, and 20448719.

Mentor participant 21017686 indicated that the mentee should contact him if the mentee feels that the mentor could add value to the conversation or problem with the response “to contact me at any time they felt I could add value.”

### *Guidance*

This code refers to a mentee seeking vocational advice or guidance from their mentor (a person in authority) in order to resolve an issue that they may have come across in their workspace (Merriam-Webster, 2018b). 21% of mentors indicated *guidance* as one of their obligations with the following responses: 20448719 “I gave the promise to listen to them without judgement, to be available to them once a month and to ask reflective questions on the problems they brought to me to discuss.” 20508171 “That each time you come with a task, I won't tell you what to do but help you figure out what will be the best ways to approach or resolve that task.” And 20454987 “I am available to my mentee as her sounding board and at times steering wheel during our sessions.”

### *Supportive*

This code refers to a situation where the mentor would provide the mentee with encouragement and moral and/or emotional support (Collins Dictionary, 2018b). 21% of mentors indicated being *supportive* as one of their mentor obligations, most notably 20508171 “I will be there to walk the journey with as a support structure not her manager.” Implying that the mentoring sessions should not be treated as a manager-subordinate role but in a more meaningful way.

### *Knowledge sharing*

This code refers to a situation where the mentor would exchange knowledge (information, experience, skills, etc.) with the mentee. Knowledge sharing or exchange would be passed on from mentor to mentee and the mentee could then transfer the knowledge on to others (Christensen & Pedersen, 2018) until the mentee becomes the mentor. Another 21% of mentors indicated *sharing experiences* as one of their mentor obligations, mentor participants 21407846

“I will ensure to transfer any knowledge to them however they have to own it” and 20499070

“To give advice and share experience.”

### *Approachable*

This code refers to a situation where the mentor would provide the mentee with encouragement and moral and/or emotional support (Thesaurus.com, 2018). The mentor should be approachable in order to encourage the mentee to approach the mentor with their problems. 21% of mentor participants indicated being *approachable* as one of their obligations; with responses such as 20457398 “to always listen and have an open door if she needs to bounce something off someone”, 21230677 “to be present to stimulate thought; to limit advice; to maintain confidentiality”, and 20451133 “Please feel free to call me when you feel the need to chat, don't wait until our next mentorship chat.”

From the above mentor expectations and obligations, *guidance*, and *availability* are recurring themes for both mentor expectations and obligations. The perceived mentor-mentee expectations overlap such as honesty, openness, guidance, dedications, etc. indicating a relationship between mentor expectations and obligations and mentee expectations and obligations.

The aforementioned overlap indicates a relationship and that a unique perceived mentee-mentor psychological contract exists as it indicates a give and take agreement between the mentor and mentee regarding mutually beneficial obligations (Bozionelos *et al.*, 2016; Rousseau, Hornung, & Kim, 2009; Rousseau, 2001<sub>a</sub>; Rousseau, 2001<sub>b</sub>; Zhao, *et al.*, 2007) that each party has towards the other in the mentee-mentor relationship that is influenced by their perceptions and expectations (Rousseau, 2011; Rousseau, 2005).

### **Proposition 1<sub>b</sub>: Unique perceived expectations and obligations are experienced by the mentee in the mentoring programme.**

From the QuestionPro questionnaire that were sent out to mentees, a number of expectations and obligations were mentioned and the following prominent expectations and obligations were identified using two questions.

*1a) Promises and commitments which mentors sometimes make to their mentees (mentee expectations)*

41 mentees identified the following expectations, namely: *guidance, availability support, advice, development, and honesty*. The table below is a summary of mentee and mentor expectations as well as mentee and mentor obligations discussed previously.

<b>Mentee expectations</b>	<b>Mentee obligations</b>
Guidance	Commitment
Availability	Honesty
Support	Openness
Advice	Dedication
Development	
Honesty	
<b>Mentor expectations</b>	<b>Mentor obligations</b>
Interest	Confidentiality
Development	Availability
Honesty	Guidance
Openness	Support
Guidance	Knowledge-sharing
Availability	Approachable

Table 1a: Mentee expectations and obligations and Mentor expectations and obligations

It is clear from the above table that a relationship exists between the mentor and the mentee indicating that a unique mentee-mentor psychological contract is in play.

*1b) Promises and commitments that mentees sometimes make to their mentor (mentee obligations)*

41 mentees identified the following obligations, namely: *commitment, honesty, openness, dedication, and receiving mentor advice*. From the above mentee expectations and obligations,



*honesty* and *giving advice* are recurring themes for both mentee expectations and obligations. This may be related to expecting honest advice from the mentor and being honest to the mentor in return. The above is an indication that the mentee experiences unique perceived expectations and obligations, which, in turn, indicates a mutually beneficial relationship (Restubog, Bordia, Tang, & Krebs, 2010) between the mentee and the mentor. Leading one to conclude that how the organisation handles the mentees' perceptions of their expectations and mentor obligations will enable organisations to more effectively handle broken perceived promises (Conway & Briner, 2009).

Interestingly, the findings indicate that only 9% of the mentees were under the perception that their mentors did not make them any promises or commitments regarding their mentoring journey; and 12% of mentees were under the perception that they did not make any promises or commitments to their mentor regarding their mentoring journey. Which may have created a negative block in the mutual beneficial relationship that forms part of a psychological contract (Dulac, Coyle-Shapiro, Henderson, & Wayne, 2008; Chambel, *et al.*, 2016) as only one party came to the proverbial table with their expectations and obligations. It is important to note that not all responses to 'unmet' promises are the same as each mentee may experience the perceived 'unmet' promises differently (Dulac, *et al.*, 2008; Farnese, *et al.*, 2018) which may or may not have an impact on mentees' feeling, behaviours, and attitudes towards the mentor (Akhtar, Bal, & Long, 2016; Dulac, *et al.*, 2008).

The mentee-mentor psychological contract relies on the perceived expectations that the mentees believe that their mentors made to them. Breach would occur if the mentee is under the perception that the mentor has failed to meet one or more obligations (Rousseau, 2011; Rousseau, Hornung, & Kim, 2009). This is in line with a breach if the exchange agreement between the mentee and mentor only occurs from one party (Chambel, Lorente, Carvalho, & Martinez, 2016) though participant responses were not clear on whether they feel that their expectations were met by their mentor and vice versa. Of the mentors, 14% indicated that they

were under the perception that their mentees did not make them any promises or commitments regarding their mentoring journey; and 7% were of the perception that they did not make any promises or commitments to their mentees regarding their mentoring journey. Indicating that they did not perceive and experience the mentoring programme as a mutually beneficial exchange agreement (Atkinson, Matthews, Henderson, & Spitzmueller, 2018).

Using the results of the propositions listed above, the research findings have at least three important implications for the mentoring programme. First, the study provides evidence that a unique mentee-mentor psychological contract exists due to the presence of overlapping mentee and mentor expectations and obligations. Secondly, there are unique mentee expectations and obligations within the mentee-mentor psychological contract and how an organisation handles the mentees' perceptions of their expectations and mentor obligations will enable the organisation to more effectively handle broken perceived promises. Lastly, mentors not fulfilling perceived expectations and obligations are perceived by mentees to be a breach of their mentee-mentor psychological contracts which may lead to negative behaviour from the mentee (Akhtar, Bal, & Long, 2016; Atkinson, *et al.*, 2018; Bordia *et al.*, 2017).

It should be noted that organisations may not be aware that the language (verbal or written) they use to describe participation in the mentoring programme can create psychological contracts in mentees who will expect full participation from the mentor when language is purposefully vague (Sherman & Morley, 2015).

## **Discussion and conclusion**

The psychological contract has been a uniquely popular research topic since Rousseau's groundbreaking research (Rousseau, 1989) rocketed the phenomenon to the forefront of human resource management research. To add to the research, this study aimed to explore the lived experience of the mentee-mentor psychological contract by identifying whether specific mentee and mentor expectations and mentee and mentor obligations occur during a mentoring programme.

The findings indicated that a unique mentee-mentor psychological contract exists between the mentor and the mentee as unique perceived mentee and mentor expectations and obligations were identified. A possible explanation for the findings is that though there may be a slight overlap between the perceived mentee expectations and obligations and the perceived mentor expectations and obligations though the difference is in the interpretation and value that each party adds to each construct. For example, a mentee may see that his mentor is available but not necessarily approachable and without a mentor being approachable the mentee may not feel comfortable to contact the mentor and set up a one-on-one session. It is interesting to note that the findings indicated that mentors focussed more on their own obligations in the mentoring process and less on their expectations. Leading one to tentatively suggest that the mentor (generally the more senior person with the most experience and skills) may be more comfortable in their role in the organisation or may have reached a 'ceiling' in their role and do not feel the need to prove that they are capable and have the necessary expertise (Bozionelos *et al.*, 2016; Sato, 2008).

Only a small percentage of participants indicated that they have not experienced any perceived expectations and obligations indicating that psychological contract breach occurred for those participants (Atkinson, *et al.*, 2018) though the impact on their behaviour and participation in the mentoring programme was not further analysed. Thus, indicating an area of interest for future research.

Overall, this study set out to prove that a unique mentee-mentoring psychological contract exists, which it did, as the researcher was only interested in whether such a unique relationship exists by identifying unique perceived expectations and obligations that each party in the mentorship brings to the mentoring programme.

### **Limitations of the study**

This study is short-sighted as it focussed mainly on a subjective relational mentee-mentor psychological contract (Atkinson, *et al.*, 2018) without investigating how the psychological

contract may change over time as the perceptions of the mentees' and mentors' involved may change (Dulac, *et al.*, 2008). A longitudinal study with the same participants may be more beneficial and add more value to the organisation to evaluate how certain changes in the mentoring programme may change participants' perceptions positively or negatively over time; as well as contribute to existing psychological contract research by indicating whether additional time may change participants' perceptions (Ployhart & Vandenberg, 2010).

Future studies on this topic should also include the onboarding process (Caldwell, Peters, & Sheard, 2018) of the mentees and the mentors to the mentoring programme to see if a more structured approach to the mentoring programme may have an effect on participant perceptions and, in turn, curb unrealistic expectations and obligations.

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**Chapter 3: Exploring the experience of the mentee-mentor psychological contract on the mentee's perceived employment relationship and future (anticipatory) psychological contracts**

Chapter 3 (Article 2) will be submitted for consideration in the South African Journal of Human Resource Management. APA referencing style will continue.

**Key words**

Psychological contract, anticipatory psychological contract, organisation, mentees, mentors, mentoring, mentee-mentor expectations, mentee-mentor obligations, perceived employment relationship, Psycones

## **Abstract**

**Orientation:** The current global environment may affect the future employment relationship by changing and adapting employment as employees' perceptions and expectations regarding employment relationships have changed. Steering more and more modern organisations, which are committed to the well-being and development of their employees, to provide a balance between perceived organisational demands and perceived employee demands that could ultimately affect business success.

**Research purpose:** This study will investigate the relationship between mentee-mentor psychological contracts and perceived future employee relationships.

**Motivation for the study:** Expanding on psychological contract theory by exploring whether a mentee's perceived pre-entry expectations and obligations regarding the mentoring programme would impact their perceived employment relationship and future (anticipatory) psychological contracts.

**Research approach/design, and method:** The study was performed using a sample of mentees (n=90) and mentors (n=11) from the automotive and corporate mining industry that participate(d) in a formal mentoring programme since 2015 using a questionnaire tailored after the Psycones questionnaire.

**Main findings:** Findings indicated that receipt of the mentee-mentor psychological contract has an impact on a mentee's future employment relationship. In addition, Likert type scales were used to test was used and the wording of the 5 point scale and 6 point scale questionnaires made it clear that expectations and obligations are part of the psychological contract.

**Practical/Managerial implications:** Managing mentee pre-entry expectations correctly will impact organisational deliverables specific to the mentee programme and labour relations management as it will affect future anticipatory psychological contracts.

**Contributions:** Psychological contract research has not focussed on the dyadic mentee-mentor relationship's impact on anticipatory psychological contracts.

## **Key words**

Psychological contract, anticipatory psychological contract, organisation, mentees, mentors, mentoring, mentee-mentor expectations, mentee-mentor obligations, Psycones

## **Introduction**

People, potential employees are an important asset for organisations, and in a rapidly changing work environment, organisations need to devise new strategies to manage the expectations that the potential employee may have of the employer. The psychological contract refers to perceived or implied expectations that employees may have of their employment (Frenkel & Bednall, 2016; Grama, 2017; Rogozinska-Pawelczyk, 2015). It is necessary to distinguish between psychological contract creation and psychological contract development as the two concepts refer to different stages of the phenomenon (Tomprou & Nikolaou, 2011). The psychological contract is subjective and depends on the employee or in this case the mentee's way of thinking regarding the specific employer obligations that an employer must fulfil (Bellou, 2009; Freese & Schalk, 2011; Rousseau, 2011; Rousseau, 2005). New employees sign contracts and policies to join the organisation and in doing so expectations are developed of each other (Alcover, Martínez-Iñigo, & Chambel, 2012; Bellou, 2009). The new employee also goes through a process of forming a verbal and/or tacit agreement that form part of a psychological contract (Rousseau, 2011; Rousseau, 2005) that is influenced, amongst other things, by the mentee's involvement and participation in the formation of a psychological contract (Linde & Gresse, 2014).

Given the importance of the psychological contract in the workplace (Abu-Doleh & Hammou, 2015; Gresse, 2012; Linde & Gresse, 2014; Zhao et al., 2007), the organisation needs to manage the aforementioned anticipatory psychological contract effectively to prevent perceived psychological contract breach (De Ruiter et al., 2017) that may lead to mentee mistrust (Zhao et al., 2007) and counterproductive work behaviour (Jensen, Opland, & Ryan, 2009) which may have an impact on the management of labour relations within the mentoring

programme and ultimately the organisation (Gresse, 2012; Linde & Gresse, 2014; Miller, 2015; Miller & Konopaske, 2014). Leading one to conclude that it is essential to manage these pre-entry expectations that will impact organisational deliverables (Campbell, Bonacci, Shelton, Exline, & Bushman, 2010) specifically to the mentee programme and labour relations management.

### **Employment relationship and the psychological contract**

The practice of familiarising new employees with the values, goals, practices, policies, and procedures of the organisation is called onboarding (Wanous & Reichers, 2000; Watkins, 2016). An essential Human Resource Practitioner task it to assimilate and integrate new employees in an organisation through onboarding (Caldwell, Peters, & Sheard, 2018; Huselid, Beatty, Kerr, & Becker, 2009). The ineffective onboarding of aforementioned employees in the organisation may lead to new employee disruptive behaviour (Smart, 2012).

The psychological contract has long been considered a tool to examine and explain organisational behaviour (Kraak & Linde, 2018) as the perceived violation or non-violation of the psychological contract may negatively affect employee behaviour (Freese & Schalk, 2008). Example: a mentor may promise to help in a mentee's future development in the form of project support and a mentee would implicitly promise to participate in their own development. The evaluation of these perceived expectations and obligations lie in the perceived degree in which promises were kept by both parties (Freese & Schalk, 2008); the mentee and the mentor, as part of the unique mentee-mentor psychological contract (Spies & Linde, in press).

### **Future anticipatory psychological contract**

The anticipatory psychological contract develops as a result of a new employee's pre-employment expectations regarding work conditions (De Ruiter, Schalk, Schaveling, & Van Gelder, 2017; De Vos & De Hauw, 2010) that the new employee cultivates during socialisation in the workplace (De Ruiter et al., 2017; Lee, 2016). The new employee's anticipatory psychological contract is reinforced by the employee's perceptions of the organisation as well as



prior social experiences (Lee, 2016) that eventually solidifies into psychological contract creation that takes place during the new employee's onboarding process at work and persists whilst the employee assimilates the new working reality (De Vos et al., 2005; De Vos et al., 2003); promises and information are constantly exchanged and revised during this stage (Tomprou & Nikolaou, 2011). To emphasise, the aforementioned psychological contract refers to any future mentee-mentor psychological contract that is the result of successfully completing a formal organisational mentoring programme.

Leading one to conclude that management needs to have an understanding of the psychological contract in order to manage the impact that an employee's expectations can have on organisational deliverables (Fisk, 2010; Tomlinson, 2013; Zhao, Wayne, Glibkowski, & Bravo, 2007). It is important to recognise, as Zhao et al. (2007) pointed out, that work attitudes such as job satisfaction and turnover intentions play an integral part in how the psychological contract is managed as lowered employee organisational commitment is likely when contract breach occurs. If improvement of the experience of the mentee-mentor employment relationship can be traced it can logically be attributed to managing the perceived mentee and mentor expectations and obligations of the psychological contract, whereby a larger use has been made of the "anticipatory psychological contract" since many other organisational changes have taken place in preparation for the future employment relationship.

### **The anticipatory psychological contract from a mentee-mentor perspective**

Mentees differ from the employee norm in that the mentee is involved in a more developmental dyadic relationship with a mentor usually in a higher employment status with the mentor providing developmental support to the mentee (Bozionelos, *et al.*, 2016). The psychological contract can be influenced by the mentee's pre-entry expectations (Linde & Gresse, 2014; Linde & Schalk, 2006) and assumptions of what the organisation has promised for the mentee's commitment to the programme (Freese & Schalk, 2011) and as mentees were hand-picked to be part of a mentoring programme they were inadvertently identified as the future leaders in the

organisation. The mentees are theoretically employees that organisations want to keep, hence, the emphasis on a mentee's perceived employment relationship.

### **Research problem and aim**

The aim of this study is to analyse the study results to the test using the value in which the psychological contract has been tested in the past (Freese & Schalk, 2008) using a bilateral approach focussing on clarifying perception differences between the mentee and the mentor as part of the psychological contract (Freese & Schalk, 2008) and, potentially, use the differences to potentially improve employment relations and anticipatory (future) psychological contracts.

Incidentally, indicating how to practically manage the formulation of an anticipatory psychological contract in an organisation in order to effectively promote and retain individuals identified as '*people with potential*' (Taylor & Harrison, 2016). Managing mentee expectations more effectively is essential in order to better manage the anticipatory psychological contract in the workplace (Eilam-Shamir & Yaakobi, 2014). A better understanding of managing these expectations, could provide insightful information to the organisation (for example: in managing mentee job expectations and the relationship between mentees and those they report to) should a mentee's perception of the psychological contract indeed be determined by a mentee's expectations (Gresse, 2012; Linde & Gresse, 2014).

The following hypotheses are proposed:

Hypothesis 1: The mentee experiences a unique employment relationship in the organisation.

Hypothesis 2: The mentee-mentor psychological contract influences the mentee's perceived employment relationship.

Hypothesis 3: The mentee expects a unique future employment relationship, due to being part of the current mentee-mentor relationship.

Hypothesis 4: The mentee expects the future psychological contract to be based on the current mentee-mentor psychological contract.

## **Research method**

### *Research participants*

A quantitative research approach was used to gather and analyse the data using the IBM SPSS program (IBM Corp., released 2018). Simple random sampling was used as the whole target population (N=140) of participants that are/were part of a formal mentoring programme since 2015 was accessible and available (Changing Works, 2018). Of the initial target population of 140 mentees and mentors, only 101 completed the questionnaires in full, indicating a 72.14% participation rate. Mentee-mentor expectations and obligations questionnaires were sent out in printed form and later captured by the researcher electronically to assess whether mentees that are or were part of a formal mentoring programme had experiences consistent with a mentee-mentor psychological contract. The data was gathered using a questionnaire designed based on the Psycones Questionnaire (Freese & Schalk, 2008).

### **Measuring instrument**

Two questionnaires tailored to mentees and mentors (Annexure C and Annexure D), similar to the Psycones Questionnaire (Freese & Schalk, 2008), were designed and divided into the following sections: 1) mentee and mentor biographical information including gender and age; 2) mentee and mentor expectations; 3) mentee and mentor obligations; and 4) state of the employment relationship. As mentioned, this questionnaire consisted of four sections as it's based on the Psycones Questionnaire. The first section focussed on biographical information; the second section focussed on mentee/mentor expectations and respondents had to respond to 12 items on a zero to six point Likert scale (Rousseau, 2000) making it clear that those expectations and obligations are part of the psychological contract (Freese & Schalk, 2008); the third section focussed on mentee/mentor obligations and respondents had to respond to 12 items on a zero to six point Likert scale, and the final section focussed on the state of the employment contract, i.e. mentor and mentee emotions and respondents had to respond to a total of six items that were determined on a one to five Likert scale (Freese & Schalk, 2008).

A comparison of quantitative responses (“Has your mentor promised or committed him/herself to provide you with reasonable support in your role?” 0=No, 3=Yes, promise half-kept, 5=Yes, promise fully kept) was conducted using the IBM SPSS program (IBM Corp., released 2018).

### **Quantitative research method**

#### *Research setting and sampling*

The study was conducted using a total sample of 101 (n=101); mentees (n=90) and mentors (n=11) from the automotive and corporate mining industry that are or were part of a formal mentoring programme during the last 3 years. The size of the sampling pool is attributed to the researcher only focussing on formal structured mentoring programmes. The majority of the participants were female (75.2%) and male (24.7%). Mentee ages ranged from 19 to 59 with the majority (73.3%) of the respondents between the ages of 25 and 40; whilst the mentors ranged from ages 34 to 61.

#### *Statistical analysis*

Once data was collected, the data was analysed using the IBM SPSS program (IBM Corp., released 2018). Factor analysis was used to determine item validity and descriptive statistics were used to provide the mean, standard deviation, skewness, and kurtosis. The Cronbach’s alpha coefficient ( $\alpha$ ) would then be used to determine the questionnaire’s reliability, the Cronbach’s alpha coefficient ( $\alpha$ ) has to be above 0.7 ( $\alpha > 0.7$ ) in order for a questionnaire to be recognised reliable (Trochim & Donnelly, 2008).

The relationship between the factors that influence mentee and mentor perceived expectations, obligations, as well as the state of the employment relationship will be measured using the correlation coefficient (Statistics How To, 2018). Pearson’s product moment correlation coefficients had to be used to see what the strength of the relationship between perceived mentee and mentor expectations and obligations variables were. Analysis of variance

(ANOVA) had to be used to determine the differences between two groups of variables (Statistics How To, 2018).

### Results

The state of the mentee employment relationship was measured using Pearson's product correlation coefficient. Pearson product moment correlation coefficients had to be used to determine relationship strength between mentee expectations, mentee obligations, and the state of the mentee psychological contract as seen in *Table 1*. In *Table 1*, the correlations are significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed\*\*).

Table 1. Pearson correlations among mentee expectations, mentee obligations, and mentee programme state

	Mentee expectations	Mentee obligations	State of the mentee programme
Mentee expectations	1.00	0.819**	0.763**
Mentee obligations	0.819**	1.00	0.704**
State of the mentee programme	0.763**	0.704**	1.00

Descriptive statistics are indicated in *Table 2* to show a normative distribution.

Table 2. Descriptive statistics and Cronbach's alpha ( $\alpha$ )

Components	M (SD)	Skewness	Kurtosis	$\alpha$
Mentee expectations	3.4194 (1.30939)	-0.757	-0.250	0.969
Mentee obligations	3.6639 (1.30682)	-1.355	1.261	0.975
Mentee state of the psychological contract	3.5400 (1.09604)	-0.465	-0.627	0.932
Mentor expectations	4.1818 (0.44537)	0.501	-0.674	0.910
Mentor obligations	4.4924 (0.46316)	-0.479	-1.215	0.766
Mentor state of the psychological contract	3.8182 (0.43111)	0.503	-1.490	0.766

Furthermore, an analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to determine whether there was a difference between the groups in *Table 3*.

Table 3. ANOVA results using state of the psychological contract as the criterion

Predictor	Sum of Squares	<i>df</i>	Mean Square	<i>F</i>	<i>P</i>
Mentee expectations	24.793	4	6.198	4.123	0.004
Mentee obligations	11.398	4	2.849	1.723	0.152

Table 4, Table 5, and Table 6 (as seen in Annexure E, p. 104) indicate the correlations between mentee obligations, mentor expectations, and the state of the mentoring programme.

### *Discussion*

The results displayed had a high correlation between mentee expectations and mentee obligations. Indicating that a unique mentee-mentor psychological contract exists, how the mentee-mentor psychological contract influences the mentee’s perception of the employment relationship was measured using 5 items that also showed a high correlation for the state of the psychological contract and employment relationship. Descriptive statistics are indicated in *Table 2* and indicates that all the measurements except item 25 had a relative normal distribution. Anticipatory mentee obligations are measured using 12 items. *Table 5* indicated that there are high correlations between all the mentee obligations. For example: There’s a high correlation (0.895) between mentor guidance and mentee commitment during the mentoring journey. A further indication that there’s a relationship between mentee expectations and mentee obligations.

The overall Cronbach’s alpha coefficients ( $\alpha$ ) are within normal parameters as they have to be above 0.7 ( $\alpha > 0.7$ ) in order for a questionnaire to be considered reliable (Trochim & Donnelly, 2008). Also in *Table 2*, the level of skewness and kurtosis fall within the normal indices of  $-2 < > 2$  (Gravetter & Wallnau, 2014; Trochim & Donnelly, 2008). Correlations are significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). Within the data, the distribution falls between -1 and 1 as prescribed (Gravetter & Wallnau, 2014).

Analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to determine whether there was a difference between the groups. *Table 3* indicated a p-value of  $0.004 \leq 0.05$ ; testing at a significance level of 0.05 (Statistics How To., 2018), indicating that the differences between the mentee expectations are statistically significant. Though the differences between the mentee expectations and mentor obligations are not statistically significant with a significance of  $0.152 > 0.05$  (Statistics How To., 2018). Anticipatory mentee expectations are measured using 12 items and *Table 4* indicated that there are high correlations between all the mentee expectations. For example: There's a high correlation (0.889) between mentor availability and mentor support during the mentoring journey. This is significant as it indicates correlations between mentee expectations and mentee obligations.

The perceived employment relationship is measured using 6 items testing the state of the mentee-mentor psychological contract. *Table 6* indicated that there are high correlations between 5 of the 6 items measuring the psychological contract state. For example: there's a high correlation (0.883) between the mentor's contribution towards the mentee's development and achieving mentee goals.

First, with regards to Hypothesis 1: The mentee experiences a unique employment relationship in the organisation. Interestingly, item 25 testing the psychological contract state with the question: "*Do you feel that the mentee-mentor relationship affects your employment relationship?*" did not have an effect on the overall mentee-mentor psychological contract. 41.1% of mentees indicated that the mentee-mentor relationship does not affect their employment relationship. This may be attributed to the respondents' interpretation of the question. The results are therefore inconclusive with regards to Hypothesis 1 with whether a mentee experiences a unique employment relationship in the organisation and as a result, future anticipatory psychological contracts may be affected.

Second, with regards to Hypothesis 2: The mentee-mentor psychological contract influences the mentee's perceived employment relationship. What the results show is that the mentoring

programme only has a significant impact on certain aspects of the perceived employment relationship (such as mentor trust, impact of psychological contract on current role and skill, the contribution towards mentee development, adding value to your life, and mentoring goals) and not on the employment relationship holistically.

Third, with regards to Hypothesis 3: The mentee expects a unique future employment relationship, due to being part of the current mentee-mentor relationship. This is evident in the results of tables 4, 5, and 6 (pp. 106-109) that indicate that the mentees experience high levels of mentor trust, they feel that the mentoring programme adds value to their current role and skill-set, the mentees perceive that the mentoring programme contributes towards their development and adds value to their life.

Finally, with regards to Hypothesis 4: The mentee expects the future psychological contract to be based on the current mentee-mentor psychological contract. This is evident from item 30 that measures whether future mentoring goals were achieved. The aforementioned results indicate that the mentee perceive that their current perceived mentee-mentor psychological contract may have an impact on their future psychological contracts, though further research is needed to determine the exact impact.

## **Conclusion**

The anticipatory psychological contract and its effect on the employment relationship (Lee, 2016; Linde & Gresse, 2014; Stoilkovska & Marković, 2015) is an important element of human resource management. The study aimed to add to anticipatory psychological contract research by adding an additional obscure mentee-mentor relationship element to determine whether such a relationship would have an effect on perceptions of the current employment relationship and future psychological contracts.

The research findings have at least three important implications for the mentoring programme. Firstly, the study provides evidence that a unique employment relationship are perceived by the mentees. Secondly, the mentee-mentor psychological contract influences the



mentee's perceived employment relationship (Spies & Linde, in press). Lastly, mentees have the perception that the mentee-mentor psychological contract does not have an impact on their perceived employment relationship.

Considering the link between mentee expectations and mentee obligations, the existence of a unique mentee-mentor psychological contract in a formal mentoring programme was evident and reaffirmed. Though, a statistical link was not found between the effects of the psychological contract on the employment relationship. This may be attributed to the mentees' interpretation of the employment relationship and whether that relationship refers to a future or current employment relationship. Further studies need to be conducted to determine which perceived employment relationship the mentee refers to or measures.

### **Limitations of the study**

The results are only applicable to mentees and mentors that participate(d) in a formal mentoring programme, meaning a structured programme. Other factors not identified in the questionnaire may also influence the mentees' perceptions of their expectations, obligations, and psychological contract state. The mentee-mentor psychological contract may change over time (Dulac, Coyle-Shapiro, Henderson, & Wayne, 2008) this change may also affect the mentee's perceptions of their employment relationship and anticipatory psychological contracts. The aforementioned may lead to a mentee experiencing their current employment relationship as part of the mentoring programme differently compared to when they are not part of the mentoring programme. The suggestion would be to use a longitudinal study to test the same participants during the mentoring programme and when they have changed roles or when they are not part of the mentoring programme.

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## **Chapter 4: Conclusions, summary, limitations and recommendations**

### **Key words**

Lived experience, psychological contract, anticipatory psychological contract, organisation, business, mentees, mentoring, employment expectation, perceived employment relationship

## **Conclusion**

This chapter will provide a short summary and discussion of the preceding chapters. Provide possible research limitations as well as provide future avenues of research.

## **Summary**

This paper provided an overview of the psychological contract and established, from the findings, that a unique mentee-mentor psychological contract does exist in a formal organisational mentoring programme. Qualitative questionnaires were sent out to determine perceived mentee-mentor expectations and mentee-mentor obligations in the first article (chapter 2) and themes were identified. In the second article (chapter 3), quantitative questionnaires were sent out to determine whether unique mentee-mentor expectations and obligations would have an effect on the psychological state and perceived employment relationship.

From the qualitative data collected in *Article 1*, it was evident that a unique mentee-mentor psychological contract does exist within a formal mentoring programme. From the quantitative data collected in *Article 2*, it was reaffirmed that a unique mentee mentor psychological contract exists within a formal mentoring programme though its effect on the perceived employment relationship and future anticipatory psychological contracts are inconclusive.

## **Discussion**

The psychological contract has been a uniquely popular research topic that has been explored from many angles (Rousseau, 1989; Rousseau, 2001<sub>a</sub>; Rousseau, 2001<sub>b</sub>; Rousseau, 2005; Rousseau, 2011; Restubog, et al., 2010); this paper added an additional aspect to the psychological contract by focussing on the dyadic mentee-mentor relationship in order to better manage the psychological contract in the workplace. The findings indicated that a unique mentee-mentor psychological contract does exist in a formal mentoring programme; however, the unique mentee-mentor psychological contract's influence on perceiving the employment relationship and future (anticipatory) psychological contracts is inconclusive as it only has a significant impact on certain aspects of the perceived employment relationship and not on the

employment relationship holistically. Indicating, that further research is necessary in that regard by focussing on how the questions are formulated as well as a specific consensus amongst participants about what promises and obligations entail.

Additionally, this study aimed to identify how to practically manage the formulation of a mentee-mentor psychological contract in an organisation in order to retain '*people with potential*'. For instance, management should emphasise that participating in the formal organisational mentoring programme forms part of an individual's short- and long-term training and development (Half, 2018; Olenski, 2015); and emphasise during the onboarding phase of the mentoring programme that participation will enable the individual to work in a team, learn to collaborate, and actively use the skills acquired during the mentoring programme in their current and future job roles (Half, 2018). A better understanding of managing the mentee-mentor psychological contract, could provide insightful information to the organisation and the mentee's perception of the employment relationship and future psychological contracts.

### **Recommendations for future research**

Future research should replicate this study and focus on changes in perceived mentee-mentor expectations and perceived mentee-mentor obligations and whether that change would have an effect on future anticipatory psychological contracts and the perceived employment relationship (Coyle-Shapiro & Kessler, 2002).

### **Limitations**

A limitation in this study is that the potential change in perceived mentee-mentor expectations and perceived mentee-mentor obligations were not taken into account as the mentee that participated in the mentoring programme in the past might have a different perception than the mentee currently in the mentoring programme. Furthermore, the sample was taken only from mentees and mentors that participate(d) in a formal mentoring programme and the results may be unique only to those participants (Coyle-Shapiro & Kessler, 2002).

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## **Annexure A: Qualitative questionnaire questions**

### **i. QuestionPro Mentee Questionnaire**

Promises made to the mentee

1<sub>a</sub>) Please give a short description of promises you think that your mentor made to you (e.g., “to give me advice when I need it”).

Promises made by the mentee

2<sub>a</sub>) Please give a short description of promises you think you made to your mentor (e.g., “to give me advice when I need it”).

### **ii. QuestionPro Mentor Questionnaire**

Promises made to the mentor

2<sub>a</sub>) Please give a short description of promises you think that your mentee made to you (e.g., “to ask for advice when he/she needed it”).

Promises made by the mentor

2<sub>b</sub>) Please give a short description of promises you think you made to your mentee (e.g., “to give you advice when you need it”).

Thank you for your participation.

## Annexure B: Thematic analysis

For ease of reference, the tables below are divided into global themes and further divided into subthemes. The global themes were identified as expectations and obligations and further divided into organising themes and codes linking the responses to the aforementioned themes.

*Table 1<sub>b</sub>: Expectations*

Table 1<sub>b</sub> below correlates to table 1<sub>a</sub> in chapter 2.

Respondent	Response	Codes	Organising theme	Global theme
21493871	“Help me understand and know my Team at Terminations”	Supportive		Expectations
21335523	“To act as a resource and guide in the leadership journey, professional and personal life. To listen, and not to answer or solve my challenges but to offer support and guidance.”	Listen Supportive Guidance		
21258791	“My Mentor was extremely committed to these sessions and even just in passing and I feel that I have not done the program justice by utilizing more of these sessions for information. The very first session he advised that he would be available anytime and anywhere and he lived up to this.”	Committed Availability		
21280811	“I always knew she was approachable and address any problem that I brought to her. Provided assurance that she	Approachable Guidance Supportive Development		



	would guide me. Be there every step of the three year program to help me succeed. Provide enough opportunities to achieve all my competencies.”	Empowerment
21264005	“That I can call on her anytime I need assistance.”	Availability
21258945	“He has an open door policy, and always open for discussing concerns.”	Availability Guidance Supportive
21252556	“My mentor encouraged me to make contact whenever I needed guidance.”	Encourage Guidance
21225317	“Mentor did not make any promises.”	Neg Effect – no promises
21224934	“To be open and honest; Information provided during sessions are strictly confidential; Always there to discuss situations or areas for development”	Confidentiality Open Honesty Development Availability Empowerment
21087681	“My mentor assured me that they would be available to me for advice and guidance even after the program, and whenever I needed, which to me was extremely valuable.”	Development Guidance Supportive
21165528	“1. He is always available for me if I need anything 2. He will give me advice when I need it and it's up to me to use/take it.”	Availability Development Guidance
21124672	“To be honest with me at all	Honesty

	times.”	
21083562	“Provide support when needed. Offer advice.”	Guidance Supportive
21082362	“No promises made - but did listen and guided me in the right direction”	Neg effect – no promises Listen Guidance
21052458	“Approachable and flexible around the environment we communicated”	Approachable Flexible
21044816	“Build relationship, assist with advice.”	Build relationships Give advice
21044466	“My Mentor did not make any promises and battled to understand my needs.”	Neg effect – no promises
21043426	“To give advice and to assist in guiding me in areas where I am unsure how to proceed”	Give advice Guidance
21041580	“Support. Guidance.”	Supportive Guidance
21040519	“Always willing to assist whether it personal or work related.”	Supportive
21039342	“My mentor informed me that I could always contact him afterwards in order to ask for advice in order to become a better manager as well as person in general.”	Give advice Development
21039103	“Helped guide me through issues that I was dealing with at the time.”	Guidance
21038524	“To listen without judging. To	Listen

	be honest at all times. To be constructive. To be confidential.”	Honesty Constructive feedback Confidentiality
21037215	“Always available to talk and available to bounce questions off.”	Availability Inquisitive/ask questions
21020058	“I know where to find her, should I need help.”	Approachable Availability
21018981	“No promises were made, but a lot of interest was shown in my career, but I am not sure if it was just for a matter of being a mentee and therefore, he had to show the interest.”	Neg effect – no promises Interest
21018307	“Commitment to answering all texts or mails within 24 hours. Commitment to making time to see me each time he visited KZN for a little chin wag.”	Committed
21008146	“In my opinion, my mentor has promised to give me guidance on situations that I table.”	Guidance
20601315	“To be there every time I need to talk to her through any mode of communication we have.”	Availability
20553888	“To discuss every challenge I come across on a monthly basis and she will give the best advice on that particular month's challenge”	Guidance Supportive Give advice
20552729	“To provide guidance prior to the assessments”	Guidance
20546429	“My Mentor assured me that	Guidance

	he will give me the support and guidance required. He also mentioned that he doesn't want to solve my business challenges for me but he would rather help me look at how to overcome challenges within a business unit and how to improve myself as a manager from where I am to the next higher level.”	Supportive
20545966	“To give me honest opinions and guidance.”	Honesty Guidance
20545952	“To be a point of reference with anything that that I may want to talk about.”	Guidance
20545618	“Offered to give me advice and guidance in navigating my leadership journey and to share her experiences with me.”	Guidance Give advice Sharing experiences
20545634	“She will be supportive and give me advice when I need it.”	Supportive Give advice
20457747	“Interact during the session and be present.”	Interaction Availability
20456356	“Be a sound board. Question me to make me think.”	Guidance Supportive Interaction
20456292	“You may always contact me and don't have to wait until our next meeting.”	Availability
20456175	“Fully accessible and committed to the programme.”	Availability Committed
20456156	“To meet when we are in the	Availability

	same area.”		
21407846	“To be more proactive; more flexible; ask more questions and listen.”	Inquisitive Flexible Listen Development	Mentor expectations
21230972	“To keep our discussions confidential and to take responsibility for the decisions he/she makes.”	Confidentiality Responsibility	
21230677	“To be present to be active in the process, to be frank, honest and open.”	Honesty Open Approachable	
21165994	“To gain more insight into the business.”	Development	
21126796	“Be honest and transparent at all times. Always ask when they are unsure.”	Honesty Transparency Inquisitive	
21022184	“No specific promises made.”	Neg effect – no promises	
21017686	“I asked my mentees to contact me if they encountered anything that they believed I could add value in any way.”	Availability	
20508171	“She has asked for mentorship on business writing skills as she deals with lots of queries and budgeting, that she will share her budgeting plan and see if she is managing her budget well.”	Sharing experiences Development	
20499070	“To ask for clarity in all scenarios and to understand the big picture. This will assist the mentee in understanding what	Inquisitive Guidance	

	is required.”	
20457398	<p>“To communicate concerns to her manager when appropriate</p> <p>To bond with her team by changing meeting formats and not to be scared to admit that she knows less than them on the technical skills of the job.”</p>	<p>Communicate concerns</p> <p>Honesty</p>
20454987	<p>“My mentee and I set goals individual at our first meeting and she has committed to working towards achieving the same through asking for guidance and coming up with solutions for us to explore.”</p>	<p>Sharing experiences</p> <p>Committed</p> <p>Guidance</p> <p>Goal driven</p>
20454605	<p>“I didn't request nor receive any promises.”</p>	<p>Neg effect – no promises</p>
20451133	<p>“She will call me whenever she needs to chat. If something is bothering her she will make contact with me. If she needs to ask for advice or clarity on something, she will call me.”</p>	<p>Availability</p> <p>Inquisitive</p>
20448719	<p>“To be open and discuss their areas of development honestly. To put time and effort into the process. To stick to agreed meeting times, tasks, outcomes etc. To work on issues between sessions. To keep a 'life-line' open after the formal programme ended - all my mentees can still contact me if they feel the need.”</p>	<p>Dedication</p> <p>Development</p> <p>Open</p> <p>Self-effort</p> <p>Build relationships</p>

Table 1c: Obligations

Table 1c below correlates to table 1a in chapter 2.

<b>Respondent</b>	<b>Response</b>	<b>Codes</b>	<b>Organising theme</b>	<b>Global theme</b>
21493871	“That our Mentee and Mentor relationship continue even though the program is over.”	Build relationships		Obligations
21335523	“To be prepared, and ready to be challenged. To be open and honest. To listen and to be true to myself.”	Committed Approachable Honesty Attentive		
21258791	“I had just started in a new position and needed to find my feet and was then moved to a new position four months later which threw me a little as I need time to adjust to this new position I have been moved to. I have promised to see him but have been spending more time with my line manager for advice and assistance.”	New effect – no promises		
21280811	“Commitment and dedication to do the program to my best ability. Provide high quality of work.”	Committed Dedication		
21264005	“That I would not give up until I made it to where I would like to see myself. That I would not let any negativity distract me from my goals.”	Committed Dedication Empowerment Perseverance		
21258945	“My commitment to my responsibilities on a daily	Supportive Committed		

	basis, and have his support when needed by both parties.”			
21252556	“I would consider furthering my studies, however certain personal circumstances did not permit to pursue currently.”	Development		
21225317	“I don't believe I made any promises either.”	Honesty Committed Dedication Give advice		
21224934	“To be open and honest; To listen to advice but also would like the opportunity to discuss differences; To be fully committed to the programme.”	Honesty Respectful		
21087681	“That I would be open, honest at all times and that I would always respect my mentor for their suggestions and opinions.”	Give advice Committed		
21165528	“1. I will ask for help when I need it 2. I will drive what we discuss about 3. I will always be prepared for our meetings 4. I will receive the advice and decide when/how to use it.”	Honesty Committed Dedication Give advice		
21124672	“To be honest with me at all times.”	Honesty		
21083562	“To ask for guidance if required.”	Guidance		
21082362	“Made no promises - but I gave the solutions and feedback at each new session.”	Neg effect – no promises		
21052458	“That I will be more open to	Open		



	bridging Departments.”			
21044816	“Advice and build relationships.”	Give advice Build relationships		
21044466	“I promised my mentor my commitment to the program and ensured that I kept to the rules set out. I seemed to have mentored my mentor instead.”	Committed Neg effect – no promises		
21043426	“To be open and honest with where I need to be guided.”	Guidance Honesty Open		
21041580	“Work life balance.”	Work-life balance		
21040519	“To always be honest, loyal and do everything to the best of my ability.”	Honesty Loyal Committed		
21039342	“That I will always give my best, and if I want to see a change I will start with myself and not expect other people to make the change for me.”	Committed Dedication Self-change		
21039103	“I promised to be honest and open to the mentorship process.”	Honesty Open		
21038524	“To be honest and open throughout the process. To receive feedback constructively.”	Honesty Open Constructive feedback		
21037215	“Allow people to make mistakes and learn from their mistakes.”	Development Learn Self-change		
21020058	“To continue working on my challenges.”	Development		

21018981	“I promised that I will continue to strive towards excellence and hence be recognised for my efforts and contributions to the business.”	Business contributions		
21018307	“I promised to ensure we spoke to each other at least once a month telephonically or face to face where possible.”	Availability		
21008146	“In my opinion, I promised to make the effort to ensure all meetings are scheduled and fulfilled, and I promised to take the program seriously by preparing for our meetings and tabling topics that I need guidance on.”	Prepared Availability Dedication		
20601315	“To do my best, be bold and trust myself enough on mostly complicated situations.”	Committed		
20553888	“To always take up her advice and give feedback on the progress been made every month.”	Give advice Development		
20552729	“To ask questions when I needed guidance.”	Guidance		
20546429	“I promised to take on as much information as possible. And where needed apply all ideas that were shared with me so that I can enhance my business unit.”	Development Implement ideas		
20545966	“That I will implement certain actions in order to achieve my	Implement ideas		

	objectives.”	Development	
20545952	“To be honest and lead the mentoring sessions to be best beneficial to me. He may learn a few things but it is my utmost responsibility to get everything out of him and be the best he could have been through his wisdom.”	Development Responsibility Learn	
20545618	“I promised to listen attentively and be open about my experiences, and committed myself to achieving my goals.”	Committed Development Open Listen	
20545634	“To be honest and ask any questions I may have no matter if I feel they are irrelevant or stupid.”	Development Honesty	
20457747	“Prepare better for session, and list issues I need to discuss.”	Prepared	
20456356	“To be open. To provide feedback.”	Open Constructive feedback	
20456292	“To hold onto projects until the time is right.”	Time management	
20456175	“Committed to the programme. Be open to criticism.”	Committed Open	
20456156	“None.”	Neg effect – no promises	
21407846	“I will ensure to transfer any knowledge to them however they have to own it.”	Development Sharing experiences	Mentor expectations
21230972	“I will always be honest in my feedback. The conversations are private and confidential.”	Honesty Confidentiality	

21230677	“To be present to stimulate thought; to limit advice; to maintain confidentiality.”	Confidentiality Sharing experiences		
21165994	“To support you in your journey.”	Supportive		
21126796	“Always be available at the agreed times. Be fully committed and supportive.”	Availability Committed Supportive		
21022184	“That the time would be for the mentee and everything discussed would be confidential.”	Attentive Availability Confidentiality		
21017686	“To contact me at any time they felt I could add value.”	Availability Approachable		
20508171	“That each time you come with a task, I won't tell you what to do but help you figure out what will be the best ways to approach or resolve that task. I will be there to walk the journey with as a support structure not her manager.”	Guidance Prepared Supportive		
20499070	“To give advice and share experience.”	Give advice Sharing experiences		
20457398	“To always listen and have an open door if she needs to bounce something off someone.”	Approachable Attentive Knowledge-sharing		
20454987	“I am available to my mentee as her sounding board and at times steering wheel during our sessions.”	Knowledge-sharing Guidance		
20454605	“None - with the exception of	Confidentiality		

	confidentiality.”	Neg effect – no promises		
20451133	“Please feel free to call me when you feel the need to chat, don't wait until our next mentorship chat. Our discussions will be open and honest, yet confidential.”	Approachable Confidentiality Honesty Open		
20448719	“I gave the promise to listen to them without judgement, to be available to them once a month and to ask reflective questions on the problems they brought to me to discuss. I also promised to provide them with activities between sessions to assist in their growth or exploring their areas of development. I promised to be a neutral, outside party who would offer different perspectives on their problems by asking questions but not giving advice.”	Listen Availability Guidance Implement ideas Give advice Inquisitive		

## Annexure C: Mentee Questionnaire

### INTRODUCTION

The current global environment may affect the future employment relationship by changing and adapting employment as employees' perceptions and expectations regarding employment relationships have changed. Steering more and more modern organisations, which are committed to the well-being and development of their employees, to provide a balance between perceived organisational demands and perceived employee demands that could ultimately affect business success. A perceived exchange agreement between two parties regarding mutually beneficial obligations that each party has towards the other in the employment relationship.

### PURPOSE OF THIS QUESTIONNAIRE

The main objective of this research study is to investigate the relationship between the mentee-mentor psychological contracts and perceived future employee relationships. This questionnaire is completely anonymous and all information obtained will be handled with great confidentiality and will only be used for the purpose regarding output results for research study.

Kind regards,

Liebe Spies

Masters in Labour Relations Management

011 387 8116 / 079 848 9004

### BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

1. Gender

Male

Female

2. Please state your age: (in years)

Please rate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements by making an “X” over the appropriate number on the 0 to 5 point scale next to the statement

### 1. MENTEE EXPECTATIONS

Below is a list of some promises and commitments which mentors sometimes make to their mentees. For each, I would like you to consider whether such a promise has been made by your mentor, either formally or informally, and the extent to which it has been fulfilled.

0 = No	1 = Yes, but promise not kept at all	2 = Yes, but promise only kept a little	3 = Yes, promise half-kept	4 = Yes, promise largely kept	5 = Yes, promise fully kept
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	STATEMENT	SCALE					
1	Has your mentor promised or committed him/herself to provide you with reasonable support in your role?	0	1	2	3	4	5
2	Has your mentor promised or committed him/herself to provide you with guidance?	0	1	2	3	4	5
3	Has your mentor promised or committed him/herself to listen to you without judgement?	0	1	2	3	4	5
4	Has your mentor promised or committed him/herself to provide you with an honest opinion?	0	1	2	3	4	5
5	Has your mentor promised or committed him/herself to treat your one-on-one sessions with confidentiality?	0	1	2	3	4	5
6	Has your mentor promised or committed him/herself to provide you with development?	0	1	2	3	4	5
7	Has your mentor promised or committed him/herself to give you the skills to empower yourself?	0	1	2	3	4	5
8	Has your mentor promised or committed him/herself to give advice?	0	1	2	3	4	5
9	Has your mentor promised or committed him/herself to provide you with constructive feedback?	0	1	2	3	4	5
10	Has your mentor promised or committed him/herself to support you during your mentee journey?	0	1	2	3	4	5
11	Has your mentor promised or committed him/herself to be reasonably available for your mentee-mentor sessions?	0	1	2	3	4	5
12	Has your mentor promised or committed him/herself to sharing his/her life and/or work experiences with you?	0	1	2	3	4	5

## 2. MENTEE OBLIGATIONS

The following list consists of some promises and commitments that mentees sometimes make to their mentor. For each, I would like you to consider whether you made such a promise to your mentor, either formally or informally, and the extent to which it has been fulfilled.

0 = No	1 = <i>Yes, but promise not kept at all</i>	2 = <i>Yes, but promise only kept a little</i>	3 = <i>Yes, promise half-kept</i>	4 = <i>Yes, promise largely kept</i>	5 = <i>Yes, promise fully kept</i>
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	STATEMENT	SCALE					
13	Have you promised or committed yourself to the mentoring programme?	0	1	2	3	4	5
14	Have you promised or committed yourself to take the mentoring programme seriously and use it effectively?	0	1	2	3	4	5
15	Have you promised or committed yourself to show loyalty to the mentoring programme?	0	1	2	3	4	5
16	Have you promised or committed yourself to ask your mentor for guidance related to your role?	0	1	2	3	4	5
17	Have you promised or committed yourself to prepare for each mentee-mentor session?	0	1	2	3	4	5
18	Have you promised or committed yourself to show loyalty to the mentoring programme?	0	1	2	3	4	5
19	Have you promised or committed yourself to use the advice and skills you've learned from the mentee-mentor sessions in your role?	0	1	2	3	4	5
20	Have you promised or committed yourself to take responsibility for the mentee-mentor sessions?	0	1	2	3	4	5
21	Have you promised or committed yourself to ask questions and learn from the mentee-mentor sessions?	0	1	2	3	4	5
22	Have you promised or committed yourself to be open to constructive criticism from your mentor?	0	1	2	3	4	5
23	Have you promised or committed yourself to use your mentee-mentor sessions for self-change?	0	1	2	3	4	5
24	Have you promised or committed yourself to be honest with your mentor during your mentee-mentor sessions?	0	1	2	3	4	5



### 3. STATE OF THE MENTEE-MENTOR PSYCHOLOGICAL CONTRACT

Please answer the following statements on the following continuum of five options, with:

<i>1 =</i> <i>Not at all</i>	<i>5 =</i> <i>Totally</i>
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	<b>STATEMENT</b>	<b>SCALE</b>				
25	Do you feel that the mentee-mentor relationship affects your employment relationship?	1	2	3	4	5
26	To what extent do you trust your mentor to look after your best interests?	1	2	3	4	5
27	To what extent do you feel that your mentee-mentor sessions provided you with skills to use in your current role?	1	2	3	4	5
28	In general, how much did the mentoring programme contribute towards your development?	1	2	3	4	5
29	Do you feel the mentoring programme added value to your life?	1	2	3	4	5
30	To what extent did your mentor assist you in achieving the goals set out when you started the mentoring programme?	1	2	3	4	5

## Annexure D: Mentor Questionnaire

### INTRODUCTION

The current global environment may affect the future employment relationship by changing and adapting employment as employees' perceptions and expectations regarding the employment relationship has changed. Steering more and more modern organisations, which are committed to the well-being and development of their employees, to provide a balance between perceived organisational demands and perceived employee demands that could ultimately affect business success. A perceived exchange agreement between two parties regarding mutually beneficial obligations that each party has towards the other in the employment relationship.

### PURPOSE OF THIS QUESTIONNAIRE

The main objective of this research study is to investigate the relationship between the mentee-mentor psychological contracts and perceived future employee relationships. This questionnaire is completely anonymous and all information obtained will be handled with great confidentiality and will only be used for the purpose regarding output results for research study.

Kind regards,

Liebe Spies

Masters in Labour Relations Management

011 387 8116 / 079 848 9004

### BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

1. Gender

Male

Female

2. Please state your age: (in years)

Please rate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements by making an “X” over the appropriate number on the 0 to 5 point scale next to the statement

### 1. MENTOR EXPECTATIONS

Below is a list of some promises and commitments which mentors think mentees make to them. For each, I would like you to consider whether such a promise has been made by your mentee(s), either formally or informally, and the extent to which it has been fulfilled.

0 = No	1 = Yes, but promise not kept at all	2 = Yes, but promise only kept a little	3 = Yes, promise half-kept	4 = Yes, promise largely kept	5 = Yes, promise fully kept
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	STATEMENT	SCALE					
1	Has your mentee(s) promised or committed to ask for reasonable support in their roles?	0	1	2	3	4	5
2	Has your mentee(s) promised or committed to ask you for guidance?	0	1	2	3	4	5
3	Has your mentee(s) promised or committed to listen to you without judgement?	0	1	2	3	4	5
4	Has your mentee(s) promised or committed to ask you for an honest opinion?	0	1	2	3	4	5
5	Has your mentee(s) promised to treat your one-on-one sessions with confidentiality?	0	1	2	3	4	5
6	Has your mentee(s) promised or committed to take responsibility for your one-on-one sessions?	0	1	2	3	4	5
7	Has your mentee(s) promised or committed to be interactive during your one-on-one sessions?	0	1	2	3	4	5
8	Has your mentee(s) promised or committed to dedicate themselves to the mentoring programme?	0	1	2	3	4	5
9	Has your mentee(s) promised to communicate their concerns with you?	0	1	2	3	4	5
10	Has your mentee(s) promised or committed to be transparent in all your dealings during the mentoring programme?	0	1	2	3	4	5
11	Has your mentee(s) promised or committed to be reasonably available for your mentee-mentor sessions?	0	1	2	3	4	5
12	Has your mentee promised to discuss their development areas with you?	0	1	2	3	4	5

## 2. MENTOR OBLIGATIONS

The following list consists of some promises and commitments that mentors sometimes make to their mentee(s). For each, I would like you to consider whether you made such a promise to your mentee(s), either formally or informally, and the extent to which it has been fulfilled.

<i>0 = No</i>	<i>1 = Yes, but promise not kept at all</i>	<i>2 = Yes, but promise only kept a little</i>	<i>3 = Yes, promise half-kept</i>	<i>4 = Yes, promise largely kept</i>	<i>5 = Yes, promise fully kept</i>
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	STATEMENT	SCALE					
13	Have you promised or committed yourself to share your knowledge and experience with your mentee(s)?	0	1	2	3	4	5
14	Have you promised or committed yourself to take the mentoring programme seriously and use it effectively?	0	1	2	3	4	5
15	Have you promised or committed yourself to treat your mentee-mentor sessions with confidentiality?	0	1	2	3	4	5
16	Have you promised or committed yourself to give your mentee guidance related to his/her role?	0	1	2	3	4	5
17	Have you promised or committed yourself to prepare for each mentee-mentor session?	0	1	2	3	4	5
18	Have you promised or committed yourself to support your mentee in the mentoring programme?	0	1	2	3	4	5
19	Have you promised or committed yourself to use the advice and skills you've learned from the mentee-mentor sessions in your mentor role?	0	1	2	3	4	5
20	Have you promised or committed yourself to take responsibility for the mentee-mentor sessions?	0	1	2	3	4	5
21	Have you promised or committed yourself to listen to your mentee(s) without judgement?	0	1	2	3	4	5
22	Have you promised or committed yourself to provide your mentee with constructive criticism?	0	1	2	3	4	5
23	Have you promised or committed yourself to use your mentee-mentor sessions to give your mentee the tools for self-change?	0	1	2	3	4	5
24	Have you promised or committed yourself to be honest with your mentee during your mentee-mentor sessions?	0	1	2	3	4	5

### 3. STATE OF THE MENTEE-MENTOR PSYCHOLOGICAL CONTRACT

Please answer the following statements on the following continuum of five options, with:

<i>1 = Not at all</i>	<i>5 = Totally</i>
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	<b>STATEMENT</b>	<b>SCALE</b>				
25	Do you feel that the mentee-mentor relationship affects your employment relationship?	1	2	3	4	5
26	To what extent do you trust your mentee to look after your best interests?	1	2	3	4	5
27	To what extent do you feel that your mentee-mentor sessions provided you with skills to use in your current role?	1	2	3	4	5
28	In general, how much did the mentoring programme contribute towards your development?	1	2	3	4	5
29	Do you feel the mentoring programme added value to your life?	1	2	3	4	5
30	To what extent did your mentee assist you in achieving the goals set out when you started the mentoring programme?	1	2	3	4	5

## Annexure E: Tables

Table 4. Correlation between mentee expectations and mentee obligations (IBM Corp., released 2018).

	Support	Guidance	Non-judgemental	Honesty	Confidentiality	Development	Empowerment	Advice	Constructive feedback	Support during mentee journey	Availability	Share life and work experience
Support	1.000											
Guidance	0.842	1.000										
Non-judgemental	0.646	0.662	1.000									
Honesty	0.778	0.697	0.741	1.000								
Confidentiality	0.678	0.679	0.790	0.671	1.000							
Development	0.679	0.732	0.699	0.672	0.688	1.000						
Empowerment	0.752	0.830	0.664	0.602	0.736	0.808	1.000					
Advice	0.780	0.773	0.713	0.759	0.632	0.790	0.779	1.000				
Constructive feedback	0.769	0.701	0.673	0.755	0.604	0.707	0.662	0.832	1.000			
Support during mentee journey	0.817	0.865	0.669	0.638	0.679	0.761	0.821	0.788	0.786	1.000		
Availability	0.753	0.806	0.644	0.648	0.603	0.756	0.764	0.819	0.826	0.889	1.000	
Share life and work experience	0.647	0.607	0.687	0.626	0.511	0.691	0.639	0.784	0.685	0.670	0.695	1.000

Table 5. Correlation between mentor expectations and mentor obligations (IBM Corp., released 2018).

	<b>Commitment</b>	<b>Mentoring seriously</b>	<b>Mentoring loyalty</b>	<b>Guidance</b>	<b>Committed</b>	<b>Mentor loyalty</b>	<b>Using advice and skills</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Learning</b>	<b>Constructive criticism</b>	<b>Self-change</b>	<b>Honesty</b>
<b>Commitment</b>	1.000											
<b>Mentoring seriously</b>	0.873	1.000										
<b>Mentoring loyalty</b>	0.735	0.812	1.000									
<b>Guidance</b>	0.740	0.829	0.818	1.000								
<b>Committed</b>	0.725	0.817	0.810	0.895	1.000							
<b>Mentor loyalty</b>	0.793	0.867	0.776	0.874	0.869	1.000						
<b>Using advice and skills</b>	0.766	0.747	0.696	0.738	0.719	0.857	1.000					
<b>Responsibility</b>	0.679	0.747	0.699	0.753	0.794	0.902	0.846	1.000				
<b>Learning</b>	0.680	0.734	0.664	0.777	0.762	0.844	0.834	0.828	1.000			
<b>Constructive criticism</b>	0.673	0.627	0.552	0.707	0.633	0.756	0.785	0.748	0.737	1.000		
<b>Self-change</b>	0.730	0.736	0.725	0.801	0.767	0.860	0.896	0.824	0.851	0.825	1.000	
<b>Honesty</b>	0.692	0.645	0.537	0.668	0.613	0.786	0.827	0.772	0.773	0.889	0.824	1.000

Table 6. Correlation of the state of the mentoring programme (IBM Corp., released 2018).

	<b>Mentor trust</b>	<b>Current role skills</b>	<b>Development contribution</b>	<b>Value to your life</b>	<b>Mentoring goals achieved</b>
<b>Mentor trust</b>	1.000				
<b>Current role skills</b>	0.680	1.000			
<b>Development contribution</b>	0.711	0.760	1.000		
<b>Value to your life</b>	0.592	0.619	0.852	1.000	
<b>Mentoring goals achieved</b>	0.645	0.757	0.883	0.811	1.000