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# An exploration of the ideological dimension of the psychological contract among social enterprises: A comparison across Colombian and Italian contexts

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✦ **ABSTRACT.** Questo articolo riporta uno studio trans-nazionale sulla dimensione ideologica del contratto psicologico. Lo studio è stato condotto sui dipendenti di imprese sociali colombiane (N = 335) e italiane (N = 327). Gli obiettivi sono stati i seguenti: il primo è stato quello di stabilire la rilevanza del contratto ideologico nelle imprese sociali, che sono organizzazioni guidate da valori; il secondo quello di determinare il grado di invarianza della misura che valuta gli obblighi ideologici dei datori di lavoro e dei lavoratori; il terzo quello di testare un modello mediato degli obblighi ideologici dei dipendenti e delle organizzazioni con l'orgoglio dei dipendenti come variabile dipendente. I risultati forniscono supporto per le ipotesi e gli obiettivi dello studio. Sono state, inoltre, discusse le implicazioni dei risultati riguardanti la comprensione della dimensione ideologica del contratto psicologico nelle imprese sociali.

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✦ **SUMMARY.** This paper reports a cross-country study on the ideological aspects of the psychological contract. The study was conducted among Colombian (N = 335) and Italian (N = 327) employees working in social enterprises. The aim of the study was threefold: first, we wanted to establish the relevance of ideological contracts among social enterprises, which are value-driven organizations; second, the study was aimed at establishing the degree of invariance of a measure that assesses the ideological obligations of employers and employees; third, a mediated model of organizational and employee ideological obligations was tested using employee pride as the outcome. Findings provide support for the study's hypotheses and objectives. We discuss the implications of our findings for our understanding of the ideological dimension of psychological contracts among social enterprises.

**Keywords:** Ideological obligations, Psychological contract, Social enterprises, Italy, Colombia

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## INTRODUCTION

The *social enterprise* sector has a remarkable growth worldwide. Although cultural and institutional factors influence several features of this type of organization (Austin, Gutierrez, Ogliastri & Reficco, 2006; Galera & Borzaga, 2009; Battistelli, Galletta, Portoghese, Pohl & Odoardi, 2013; Montani, Odoardi & Battistelli, 2014), it is now widely recognized that social enterprises share some common characteristics. Essentially, a social enterprise is defined as a value-driven/market oriented organization that has a social mission (Westall, 2001). This social mission, or the organization's commitment to address social needs (Doherty, Foster, Mason, Meehan, Rotheroe & Royce, 2009), is assumed to permeate the structure, governance, and management of these organizations. However, there is little empirical evidence that the social mission similarly shapes other organizational features of social enterprises within other regions of the world. Moreover, the social focus of social enterprises is plausibly congruent with the social/ideological orientation of their employees. Indeed, compared to employees working for other types of organizations, the regular/paid employees of social enterprises should hold a stronger ideological orientation.

Surveying social enterprises' employees from different countries can offer interesting insights into what characterizes and defines these organizations, particularly in regard to their commitment to their social mission. Several scholars have noted that social enterprises are characterized by a socially oriented ethos that guides the development of the social venture and calls the attention of potential funders and future employees (Bull, Ridley-Duff, Foster & Seanor, 2010). This value-driven orientation also exerts a profound effect on the development of the social enterprise's organizational culture. These aspects of the social enterprise likely influence the behaviors of its members (Austin et al., 2006). The social enterprise's organizational culture, guided by the founding social mission, would attract prospective members with similar values, and influence socially oriented behaviors among their employees. Along this line, researchers have suggested that workers affiliated with social enterprises display an *ideological profile* (Hoffmann, 2006), meaning that they have a major interest in the social impact of their work (Mosca, Musella & Pastore, 2007). However, more research on the effects that this ideological profile has on the attitudes and behaviors of social enterprises' workers is needed.

Despite the importance granted by researchers to both

the social enterprise's ethos and the ideological profile of their employees, scarce empirical research has addressed the relationship between the social enterprise's mission and the ideological profile of workers from these organizations. A few studies have examined the ideological profile of social enterprise workers. For example, Mosca et al. (2007) found a positive relationship between procedural justice and social enterprise workers' satisfaction with the non-pecuniary aspects of their jobs. However, to our knowledge, little research has explored the extent to which social enterprises follow their social mission and take their workers' ideological profile into account. As suggested above, extant research has been limited to grasping social enterprise workers' ideological orientation/profile via their perceptions of organizational practices and processes (e.g., procedural justice). Yet, the ideological orientation/profile refers to the interest in the social impact of one's work (Mosca et al., 2007), not to the extent to which organizational practices are deemed to be fair. Moreover, organizational processes and practices are expressions of the organization's culture and values (Schein, 1988). Thus, looking at social enterprise workers' perceptions of the obligations with regard to the organization's social mission would provide a better understanding of the social enterprise's ethos and its workers' ideological orientation.

## THE IDEOLOGICAL DIMENSION OF PSYCHOLOGICAL CONTRACT

The psychological contract concept is based on Homans' social exchange theory (1961), March and Simon inducement-contribution model (1958) (Anderson & Schalk, 1998) and Barnard's 'theory of equilibrium' (1938). Homan's (1961), and March and Simon's (1958) approaches suggest that expectations and obligations have an important role in the employer-employee exchange. In turn, Barnard's (1938) theory of equilibrium states that the contributions of the employee depend on the organization inducements (Roehling, 1997). The notion of expectations and obligations as key elements of the work relationship, and the idea of interdependence between the organization's inducements and the contributions of the employee, became the cornerstones of further developments in the theory of the psychological contract.

Although the concept of psychological contract has been attributed to several authors (Roehling, 1997), it seems that Argyris (1960) and, subsequently, Levinson, Price, Munden,

Mandl & Solley (1962) introduced the term (Anderson & Schalk, 1998; Taylor & Tekleab, 2004). Whereas Argyris (1960) suggested that the psychological contract refers to explicit tangible aspects to be exchanged between a group of workers and the employer (Coyle-Shapiro & Parzefall, 2005), Levinson and colleagues (1962) proposed that the term alludes to an un-written exchange composed by a sum of expectations withheld by both the individual and the organization. Accordingly, Schein (1965) asserted that the notion of psychological contract comprises the expectations of the employee and also those of the organizations.

The conceptualization of PC experienced a paramount development in the 1990's (i.e. DeMeuse & Tornow, 1990; Rousseau, 1990, 1995; Rousseau & Aquino, 1993; Sims, 1994). In particular, the concept developed by Rousseau (1989) implied a break point with regard to earlier PC definitions (Coyle-Shapiro & Parzefall, 2005). According to Rousseau and Tijoriwala (1998) "A psychological contract is an individual's belief in mutual obligations between that person and another party such as an employer (either a firm or another person)" (p. 679). Summarizing, psychological contract refer to the non-written agreements that govern relationships between employees and organizations (Rousseau, 1995). Based on distinction between economic and social components, the psychological contract have been distinguished in *transactional* (relate to the exchange of primarily economic currency) and *relational* (relate to the exchange of primarily socioemotional currency). Recently a new typology was added: the *ideological* psychological contract. The ideological is defined as "credible commitments to pursue a valued cause or principle (not limited to self-interest) that are implicitly exchanged at the nexus of the individual-organizational relationship" (Thompson & Bunderson, 2003). Ideological psychological contract seems to be present in organizations with a strong interest on values. Studies have recently shed light on the ideological components of the employee-organization relationship (Bal & Vink, 2011; Bingham, 2005; Thompson & Bunderson, 2003) and highlights the important role of ideological orientations in the development of positive relationships between workers and organizations. According to Bunderson (2001), Thompson and Bunderson (2003) and Rousseau (2001), ideological contents such as professional and administrative ideologies would shape employee-organization relationships, over and above the relational and economic obligations involved in transactional and relational contracts. Ideological contracts should involve two

components: workers' perception that the organization is obligated to provide the conditions for realizing moral ideals (Bal & Vink, 2011) and their own obligation to participate in the organization's mission (Thompson & Bunderson, 2003). Exchanges between these ideological obligations constitute a separate dimension of psychological contracts. Thus, the exchange of perceived ideological obligations or "ideological currencies" (Thompson & Bunderson, 2003) would lead to the creation of an ideological psychological contract.

Several operationalizations of ideological contracts have been recently proposed (Bingham, 2005; Bal & Vink, 2011). Bingham's (2005) empirical study demonstrated the independence of ideological contracts from the relational and transactional dimensions of psychological contracts. His research supported the predictive validity of the ideological contracts construct by showing specific effects on in-role and extra-role behaviors (Bingham, 2005). Bingham's study (2005) showed that people working in for-profit organizations are aware of the organization's and their own ideological obligations. In addition, Bingham (2005) found that the ideological contents of the psychological contract have specific individual outcomes in these organizations.

Bingham's (2005) measure allows assessing workers' perceptions in regard to both social enterprises' commitment to address social needs and their own obligations with respect to the social mission. Using this measure, Vantilborgh, Bidee, Pepermans, Willems, Huybrechts and Jegers (2014) found that when volunteers perceive that non-profit organizations declare and up-hold their obligations with regard to the social mission, they reciprocate with effort dedicated to the organization.

## Pride among Social Enterprise Workers

According to Tyler (1999) and Tyler and Blader (2002), the links between the individual and the organization is the result of a social identification process. As part of this process, individuals assess the status of the organization (pride) in order to establish the suitability of the employment relationship (Tyler, 1999; Tyler & Blader, 2002). Blader & Tyler (2009) consider pride in organization an evaluative component of the social identity. Pride is an evaluation of the standing of one's organization and Blader & Tyler (2009) argue that pride and respect are key to workers' identification with the organization and satisfaction during work (Boezeman & Ellemers, 2014).

Boezeman & Ellemers (2014) found that pride is related to organizational identification in the non-profit organizations.

As mentioned above, social enterprises are guided by a particular ethos. This socially oriented ethos seems to parallel what some authors named the ideological profile of people working in the social enterprise sector. Most studies that examined the ideological profile of social enterprise workers focused on its effect on well-being (e.g., Mosca et al., 2007). In contrast, virtually no empirical research has addressed the impact that both the social enterprise ethos and the ideological profile of its workers have on workers' bond to the organization. We contend that a positive relationship will be found between the social enterprise's commitment to accomplish its social mission and the social orientation of its workers, with the latter mediating the relationship of the former to workers' pride of being a member of the social enterprise.

We propose that social enterprise workers with an ideological profile will perceive the commitment of their organization to a social mission as a source of motivation that would increase their own ideological obligations, and ultimately, their pride of being members of the organization. In other words, perceived organizational ideological obligations should exert a positive effect on workers sense of pride with the social enterprise through stronger employee ideological obligations.

## AIM AND HYPOTHESIS

This study addresses the ideological profile of social enterprise workers as manifested in their ideological/psychological relation with their organization and intends to extend Bingham's (2005) research by examining the degree of invariance of ideological contracts across two countries, Italy and Colombia. By simultaneously studying organizational and workers' ideological obligations in Italian and Colombian social enterprises, our research provides an opportunity to test if the organization's social mission is a common feature of social enterprises of the two countries. We chose to study the ideological content instead of examining ideological contract fulfillment, violation, or breach, for two reasons. First, research on employer-employee exchanges in social enterprises is relatively new. Therefore, establishing whether ideological obligations are an integral part of the exchanges in this type of organization is warranted. Second, following Rousseau and Tijoriwala (1998), "assessing the content of the psychological

contract can answer a variety of research questions, including differences in contracts across organizational positions or roles, firms, or national culture" (p. 685). Thus, studying ideological obligations should help to better understand the differences and similarities in ideological exchanges among social enterprises of the two countries.

Further, we intend to examine whether employees' perceptions of organizational ideological obligations are positively associated with their perceptions of their own ideological obligations toward their organization.

Finally, we intend to determine how perceived organizational and employee ideological obligations contribute to employee pride in being affiliated with the social enterprise across the two countries. Aside from testing the predictive validity of Bingham's (2005) measure in the two countries, findings from this study should help to our knowledge of ideological obligations as antecedents of individual-level outcomes.

In doing so, we use a measure developed by Bingham (2005) who explored the ideological relationship that workers develop with their organizations. In the present study, Bingham's (2005) instrument was examined within two countries, Italy and Colombia. In doing so, we expected to provide cross-country empirical evidence of the theoretical foundations of the ideological orientation/profile of social enterprise workers.

This study intends to determine whether commitment to respond to social needs is a generalizable property of social enterprises whatever their cultural context. The social mission is recognized by scholars from different regions of the world (Doherty et al., 2009; Galera & Borzaga, 2009; Westall, 2001) as being the cornerstone of the social enterprise across cultural contexts. However, the cross-cultural generalizability of the social orientation of social enterprises remains an untested assumption. In this study, data were collected from a European country where social enterprises have a longstanding tradition (i.e. Italy) and from a Latin American country where the social enterprise sector is just emerging (i.e. Colombia). Thus, comparing these different contexts provides a strong test of the cross-cultural validity of the ideological contract construct.

Based on the above discussion, we propose the following hypotheses.

- *Hypothesis 1:* Perceptions of ideological psychological contract obligations of social enterprises and their

employees are invariant across Italian and Colombian social enterprises.

- *Hypothesis 2:* The perceived ideological contract obligations of social enterprises are positively related to social enterprise employees' own ideological obligations.
- *Hypothesis 3:* Employees' ideological obligations will mediate a positive relationship between organizational ideological obligations and employees' pride of being affiliated with the social enterprise.

## METHOD

### Sample and Procedure

Data for this study were collected from a number of Italian and Colombian social enterprises. The Italian social enterprises were providing social services while Colombian social enterprises were created to tackle the high level of unemployment among women at the local level. A total of 396 and 373 self-administered paper based questionnaires were distributed in 16 cooperative Italian social enterprises and in two Colombian social enterprises respectively. The questionnaires were administered in both individual and group sessions depending on the availability of the respondents. The participants responded voluntarily and were told that individual data were anonymous. Questionnaires were translated into Italian and Spanish using a standard translation-back-translation procedure (Schaffer & Riordan, 2003). All the participants were employees which responded to the questionnaires on a voluntary basis. In the Italian sample, 83% of the participants provided usable responses while the response rate in the Colombian enterprises was 90%. Among Italian social enterprises, 73% of the respondents were women, average tenure was approximately 6 years ( $SD = 5.79$ ), and average age was 39 years ( $SD = 10.21$ ). In the Colombian social enterprises, nearly 93% of the respondents were women, average tenure was about 9 years ( $SD = 7.6$ ), and average age was 34 years ( $SD = 8.52$ ).

### Measures

*Ideological obligations.* To date, two measures of the ideological psychological contract have been developed. Bal and Vink's (2011) measure was designed to capture the ideological

psychological contract within educational institutions. The other available measure, developed by Bingham (2005), appears to be more suitable to assess the ideological obligations of workers and organizations running a wider range of activities. We used that measure in our study. Bingham's measure is composed of 7 items assessing workers' perception of the organization's ideological obligations and 7 items measuring their perception of their own ideological obligations. The two scales have been found to be distinct from Rousseau's (1995) relational and transactional psychological contract measures (Bingham, 2005). Items pertaining to the organization's ideological obligations were preceded by the following sentence: "Our cooperative is obligated to ..." while those referring to individuals' own ideological obligations were introduced as follows: "As a worker of this cooperative, I feel obligated to ...". Typical items for the two scales include "contribute to the stated cause", "maintain company culture that promotes our corporate principles", and "act as a public advocate of the espoused cause". Items (which were identical across the two scales) were used to assess both perceptions of the organization's ideological obligations and workers' own ideological obligations.

*Pride.* Workers' feelings of pride of being a member of the organization were assessed using the 3-item *Autonomous Pride Scale* developed by Tyler and Blader (2002). Previous research has reported good reliability for this scale ( $\alpha = .87$  in Boezeman and Ellemers [2007] and  $.78$  in Tyler and Blader [2002]). We adapted the items to the specific context of this study. Sample items include "I am proud of being a member of this social enterprise" and "I am proud to be a member of an enterprise with a social mission".

### DATA ANALYSIS

Mplus (version 6.1) statistical software was used to analyse the data. Recently, Asparouhov and Muthén (2009) recommended the Multi-Group Exploratory Factor Analyses (MG-EFA) approach to run simultaneous validations of measures on multiple-samples. MG-EFAs can be used in cross-national exploratory studies to examine the invariance of new measurement scales. Two types of models can be tested following the MG-EFA approach. These models vary according to the degree of invariance imposed by the researchers. On the one hand, it is possible to test scalar invariance models (SIM) in order to examine if the number of

factors are equal and factor loadings distributed the same way across samples. This is the simplest type of invariance model and a necessary condition to assess more restrictive models of invariance. On the other hand, the researcher can explore the degree (low or strong) of *metric invariance* of a measure. To test low metric invariance, the same factor structure with equal values for all factor loadings are imposed in all samples (Asparouhov & Muthén, 2009; Kline, 2011). The more restrictive model, or Strong Metric Invariance Model (MIM-strong), includes the constraints of both equality of factor loadings and associated error variances across samples.

If the SIM fits the data, one can conclude that the same constructs manifest themselves more or less the same way in all the samples under study. Conversely, if the low metric invariance model (MIM-low) is accepted, the researcher can conclude that the same constructs manifest themselves the same way across samples (e.g., the same weighting scores are operating for the factors). As a result, the scores on observed variables (i.e., items) can be compared across samples (Kline, 2011; Milfont & Fischer, 2010).

Following the model-trimming approach used by Asparouhov and Muthén (2009), three MG-EFA models were tested: SIM, MIM-low, and MIM-strong models. Oblique rotation (CF-Varimax) was chosen for these analyses. Maximum likelihood estimation with robust standard errors (MLR) was employed to cope with a little asymmetry on the data. Since the metric invariance MG-EFAs were nested in the scalar invariance MG-EFA (i.e., the SIM model), the Satorra-Bentler ( $\chi^2$ diff) test was used to choose the model that best fitted the data. The Comparative fit index (CFI), the Tucker-Lewis index (TLI) and the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) were used to assess the goodness of fit of each MG-EFA model. The cut-off value for the CFI and TLI indices is .95 (Hu & Bentler, 1999). The rule of thumb for the RMSEA is .08 or less (Browne & Cudeck, 1993). In order to test Hypothesis 3, we analyzed a full-mediation model in both samples. To this end, a series of path analyses were conducted separately in each sample. The low sample size/parameters ratio precluded the use of multi-group structural equation modeling to test a mediation model across samples. According to Jackson (2003), the ratio between cases and parameters that require statistical estimation should be 20:1. Since each mediation model has 29 parameters, the number of cases per sample should be at least 580 cases for each sample. Neither Colombian sample nor the Italian one reached the required sample size.

## RESULTS

Independent exploratory analyses with Varimax rotation conducted in each sample indicated that ten of the 14 original items (71%) loaded onto the organizational ideological obligations and worker ideological obligations factors. The rest of the items were dropped because their factor loadings were lower than the cut-off value of .40 (see Hair, Anderson, Tatham & Black, 2008). Cronbach's alpha coefficients were acceptable in the two samples (see Table 4). As can be seen from Table 1, the SIM model yielded a good fit to the data,  $\chi^2(52) = 157.12$ ,  $p < .001$ , RMSEA = .078 (CI = .064, .092), CFI = .95, TLI = .92. All the items in the SIM model significantly loaded on their corresponding factors. The next step was to compare the SIM model with the more restrictive MIM models. As can be seen from Table 1, the MIM-low model, which constrains non-standardized factor loadings to be equal across samples, was not significantly different from the SIM model,  $\chi^2_{diff}(16) = 17.42$ , *ns*. On the other hand, the MIM-strong model yielded a poorer fit to the data than the MIM-low model,  $\chi^2_{diff}(10) = 38.39$ ,  $p < .01$ . Thus, based on the principles of parsimony and significance (Kline, 2011), the MIM-low is retained as the best fitting model in this study. As the MIM-low model represents a reasonably good invariance of the model across samples, Hypothesis 1, which predicted invariance of the structure of organizational and worker ideological obligations in Italian and Colombian samples, is thus supported.

Table 2 reports the factor loadings of organizations' and employees' ideological obligations for the two samples. As can be seen, standardized factor loadings were sizeable in the two samples (>.45) and the cross-loadings were quite low (<.40), which suggests good discriminant validity for the two ideological obligations scales (Hair et al., 2008). In the Italian sample, the two ideological obligations factors correlated .58 ( $p < .01$ ) while in the Colombian sample, this correlation reached .76 ( $p < .01$ ). These results confirm Hypothesis 2, which stated that perceived organizations' obligations would be positively related to employees' own ideological obligations. As the MIM-low model was retained, a comparison of item means across samples could be conducted. Given that the MIM-Strong did not adequately fit the data, latent factor means were not compared (Kline, 2011). According to the *post hoc* t-tests conducted to this end (in which a Bonferroni correction has been applied to limit Type-I errors; Stevens, 1986), all item means appeared to be significantly higher in the Colombian sample.



**Table 1** – Results of multi-group exploratory factor analyses for organizational and employee ideological obligations across the Colombian and Italian samples.

Model	$\chi^2$	df	c	RMSEA	90% CI	CFI	TLI	Model comparison	$\chi^2_{diff}$	df
1. SIM	157.12***	52	1.78	.078	(.064, .092)	.95	.92	–	–	–
2. MIM-low	173.43***	68	1.80	.068	(.056, .081)	.95	.94	1 vs. 2	17.42	16
3. MIM-strong	219.38***	78	1.97	.074	(.063, .086)	.94	.93	2 vs. 3	38.39**	10

Note. Ns = 335 (Colombia) and 327 (Italy). SIM = Scalar invariance model; MIM-low = Low metric invariance model-; MIM-strong = Strong metric invariance model; c = Scaling correction factor; CI = Confidence interval; RMSEA = Root Mean Square Error of Approximation; CFI = Comparative fit index; TLI = Tucker-Lewis index.

\*\* $p < .01$ ; \*\*\* $p < .001$ .

The results shown in Table 3 indicate that 5 out of the 10 t-tests were significant. The p-values of another t-test equaled the cut-off value. The p-values of the other 3 t-tests were roughly over the rule of thumb. Hence, most of the results shown in table 3 suggest that ideological obligations of social enterprises and employees are at least as salient and relevant in the Colombian economy as in a developed country such as Italy.

For both samples, we then run a path analysis in which the organization's perceived ideological obligations were related to employees' own ideological obligations, which in turn affected employees' feelings of pride. To account for variables' measurement errors, the error variance associated with each variable was fixed to the variance of the variable multiplied by one minus its reliability. This procedure allows fixing the error variance of each construct on the basis of the scale reliabilities and the relevant variance associated with each factor (Hayduk, 1987; Susskind, Kacmar & Borchgrevink, 2003). The fully mediated model yielded a good fit to the data in the Colombian sample,  $\chi^2(1) = 1.41$ , *ns*, RMSEA = .04 (CI = .00, .17), CFI = .99, TLI = .99, and in the Italian sample,  $\chi^2(1) = 2.2$ , *ns*, RMSEA = .07 (CI = .00, .19), CFI = .99, TLI = .98. A model that additionally included a direct path from organizational ideological obligations to pride did not improve significantly over the fully mediated model in both samples; moreover, in that model the direct link between organizational ideological obligations and pride was non significant in both samples. Thus, the more parsimonious fully mediated model was retained as the best model in both samples. In that model, organizational

ideological obligations were positively related to employee ideological obligations ( $r = .67$ ,  $p < .01$ , and  $r = .64$ ,  $p < .01$ , for the Colombian and Italian samples, respectively) which in turn were positively related to employee pride ( $r = .65$ ,  $p < .01$ , and  $r = .59$ ,  $p < .01$ , for the Colombian and Italian samples, respectively). Using a bootstrapping approach (Preacher & Hayes, 2008) on 5,000 resamples of the data, we found the indirect effect of organizational ideological obligations on employee pride through employee ideological obligations to be significant in both samples (estimate = .44, 99% CI = .34, .53, in the Colombian sample; and estimate = .38, 99% CI = .27, .48, in the Italian sample). The model explained 45% of the variance in employee ideological obligations and 43% of employee pride in the Colombian sample. In the Italian sample, the fully mediated model explained 40% of the variance of employee ideological obligations and 35% of the variance of employee pride. These results provide full support for Hypothesis 3.

## DISCUSSION, PRATICAL IMPLICATIONS, LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

This paper presents a cross-country analysis aimed at extending Bingham's (2005) findings on the ideological psychological contract. Using samples of social enterprises in Italy and Colombia, we found good evidence for the invariance of the measure of organizational and employee ideological obligations across the two countries. This is

**Table 2.** – Metric Invariance Model-Low (MIM-low) Factor Matrix (CF-Variimax Rotation).

Item	Colombian sample			Italian sample		
	Organizational ideological obligations	Employee ideological obligations	R <sup>2</sup>	Organizational ideological obligations	Employee ideological obligations	R <sup>2</sup>
1. Commit resources towards advancing the stated cause	.60*	.10	.44	.68*	.10	.57
2. Encourage employee's involvement in the cause	.75*	.04	.60	.83*	.04	.74
3. Act as a public advocate of the espoused cause	.78*	.06	.67	.78*	.06	.67
4. Be dedicated to its mission	.70*	.12	.60	.78*	.12	.77
5. Maintain company culture that promotes our organizational principles	.62*	.16	.53	.73*	.18	.76
6. Commit resources toward advancing the stated cause	.17	.54*	.43	.20	.60*	.58
7. Encourage employee's involvement in the cause	.14	.71*	.63	.15	.73*	.71
8. Act as a public advocate of the espoused cause	.10	.75*	.65	.10	.76*	.70
9. Be dedicated to the organizational mission	.10	.75*	.66	.12	.80*	.79
10. Help maintain company culture that promotes our corporate principles	.07	.72*	.59	.08	.82*	.78

Note. *Ns* = 335 (Colombia) and 327 (Italy). Items 1-5 = organizational ideological obligations; items 6-10 = employee ideological obligations. Standardized factor loadings and explained variance (*R*<sup>2</sup>) are reported. In the MIM-low model, standardized factor loadings differ across samples as no equality constraints are applied to factor and item variances. \**p*<.01.

**Table 3.** – Post-hoc t-test statistics: Comparison of item scores among samples.

Item	Colombian sample		Italian sample		t-test*
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
1. Commit resources towards advancing the stated cause	4.18	.71	3.73	.79	$t(663) = 5.78, p = .00001$
2. Encourage employee's involvement in the cause	4.18	.70	3.91	.87	$t(663) = 4.41, p = .00001$
3. Act as a public advocate of the espoused cause	4.20	.71	3.88	.93	$t(556) = 4.38, p < .00001$
4. Be dedicated to its mission	4.31	.74	3.71	.87	$t(589) = 3.46, p = .0005$
5. Maintain company culture that promotes our organizational principles	4.10	.76	3.86	.79	$t(588) = 3.60, p = .0003$
6. Commit resources toward advancing the stated cause	4.07	.75	3.70	.88	$t(590) = 5.79, p < .00001$
7. Encourage employee's involvement in the cause	4.12	.70	3.69	.86	$t(576) = 6.96, p < .00001$
8. Act as a public advocate of the espoused cause	4.17	.71	3.77	.91	$t(556) = 6.19, p < .00001$
9. Be dedicated to the organizational mission	4.04	.81	3.75	.92	$t(597) = 4.17, p = .00003$
10. Help maintain company culture that promotes our corporate principles	4.00	.78	3.70	.87	$t(609) = 4.67, p < .00001$

*Note.* \* significance at the .00001 level after Bonferroni correction

**Table 4.** – Correlations and reliabilities.

	1	2	3	$\alpha^1$	$\alpha^2$
1. Organizational ideological obligations		.67*	.48*	.86	.92
2. Employee ideological obligations	.64*		.65*	.82	.93
3. Pride	.38*	.59*		.72	.85

*Note.*  $N_s = 335$  (Colombia) and  $327$  (Italy). \* $p < .01$ . Correlations Colombian Sample above the diagonal; Correlations Italian sample below the diagonal.  $\alpha^1$  Cronbach Alpha Colombian Sample;  $\alpha^2$  Cronbach Alpha Italian Sample.

consistent with prior research showing that dimensions of the psychological contract are applicable to non-Western contexts (Hui, Lee & Rousseau, 2004). Our study also contributes to psychological contract theory as it validates a measure that addresses dimensions that are not typically examined in research on employer-employee relationships (Rousseau & Tijoriwala, 1998). Moreover, the strong relationships between organizational and employee ideological obligations found in both the Italian and Colombian samples suggest that socially driven organizational cultures tend to match the perceived ideological obligations of people working in the social enterprise industry. The fact that organizational ideological obligations were positively related to employees' pride of being members of the organization (i.e., social identification) through their own ideological obligations provides further evidence supporting this assertion.

There are plausible explanations to the slight differences among ideological obligations across Italian and Colombian participants. According to Thomas, Au and Ravlin (2003), culture influences the content of the psychological contract. Although these authors argue that culture has an influence on the salience and importance of transactional vs. relational contents in the employer-employee relationship, it seems plausible that national particularities also influence the importance given by Italian and Colombian employees to the ideological terms of their exchange relationship with the organization. Prior research on the influence of national culture on reciprocity behaviors could also explain the differences found in the relationship between ideological obligations across samples. Buchan, Croson and Dawes's (2002) study showed that there is an interaction between culture and propensity to reciprocate. Similarly, Gächter and Herrmann (2009) found that reciprocity depends on national culture and demographic variables. According to these findings, differences in reciprocity stem from the fact that, in some cultural contexts, people tend to reciprocate when they are older (as is the case for the Italian sample), when they believe that others cooperate, and when cooperators are not punished (antisocial punishment).

As Taylor, Darcy, Hoye and Cuskelly (2006, p. 128) argue, "practices that are effective in managing transactional contracts might be highly dysfunctional if used in a context where relational contracts are expected". Applying this logic to ideological contracts, one may suggest that managers of social enterprises should be aware of the prevalence of

ideological obligations among their employees and structure their relationships with them accordingly. The negative consequences of ignoring the ideological profile of people working in social enterprises would be potentially important. For example, breach of the ideological contract can result in a reduction of worker satisfaction and an increase of turnover (Bunderson, 2001; Rousseau, 2001). Our paper contributes to the management of employees within social enterprises by offering cross-country evidence for the relevance and impact of perceived organizational and workers' ideological obligations. Compared with previous research on the social enterprise ethos, our results provide more proximal evidence that social enterprise workers' attitudes at work are driven by ideological obligations. In particular, social enterprise managers should consider that employees who feel attracted and come to work in these companies are sensitive to ideological obligations, and should thus use that information at the recruitment stage and to manage them once they enter the organization.

This study has limitations. First, we did not assess the other dimensions of the psychological contract. Future research should use the transactional and relational dimensions of psychological contracts as controls. For example, such research would help to determine the impact of economic and ideological perceived inducements and obligations. Because social enterprises are hybrid organizations and are mainly composed of paid staff, the results of such studies would offer interesting insights for human resource managers. Second, this study relied on a cross-sectional design and could be subject to common method variance effects. No statistical remedies were applied to reduce this bias since adding additional free parameters would have increased the complexity of the MEFA model and led to a non convergent solution. Our results should be replicated using longitudinal designs. Such research designs will help to establish the accuracy of the results regarding the causal relationships proposed in this study. Furthermore, our findings can be extended with longitudinal studies addressing the role of ideological obligations as predictors of objective outcomes (e.g., job performance). Longitudinal research could also address the effects of ideological contract fulfillment, breach, and violation. Lastly, other models of ideological contracts should be proposed and tested, particularly as these contracts may have effects on many other attitudes and behaviors in the workplace.

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