Career Anchor Preferences of ITES Professionals in Today's Scenario- Study in Bangalore

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ABSTRACT *Career Anchor is one of the new concepts under Career Development and identification of the same is essential for an individual as well as an organization. Every employee has their own career interests and desires to work with certain companies and since all of individuals do not possess a clear idea about their career anchors, there is certainly a need to identify them .Through well planned, positive attitude, an individual can shape his/her career. This study attempts to identify the career anchors of ITES employees and classify them under eight dimensions. These eight dimensions are Technical/ Functional Competence, Managerial Competence, Security and Stability, Entrepreneurial Creativity, Autonomy /Independence, Service /Dedication to a cause, Pure Challenge, Life Style. Totally 300 professionals working with 26 different ITES companies located in Bangalore took part in the survey. The findings revealed that employees of ITES companies in Bangalore gave prominence service/ dedication, security followed by lifestyle.*

Introduction

Making employees feel a sense of accomplishment, organizations need to create an inductive work environment. In order to understand the employee's aspirations there is a necessity to provide a means by which employees can reach their accomplishments. This is possible through understanding career anchors. A career anchor is 'that one element in a person's self-concept that he or she will not give up, even in the face of difficult choices'. The word "career" is used here in the general sense of the set of occupational experiences and roles that make up a person's work life. In this sense all of us have careers even if our work is very mundane and "non-professional." So everyone develops a career anchor, but in many occupations there is insufficient flexibility in the work situation for the anchor to be expressed at work (Edgar H. Schein, 1990).

Schein's typology of career anchors by is given below in Table1.

Table 1.Schein's typology of Career Anchors

Sl No	Career Anchors	Description
1	Technical/Functional Competence	Primarily excited by the content of the work itself; prefers advancement only in his or her technical/ functional area of competence; generally disdains general management as too political.
2	Managerial Competence	Primarily excited by the opportunity to analyze and solve problems under conditions of incomplete information and uncertainty; likes harnessing people together to achieve common goals; stimulated (rather than exhausted by crisis situations.
3	Security and Stability	Primarily excited by job security and long term attachment to one organization; willing to conform and to be fully socialized into organizational values and norms; tends to dislike travel and relocation.
4	Entrepreneurial Creativity	Primarily motivated by the need to build and create something that is entirely their own project; easily bored and likes to move from project to project; more interested in initiating new enterprises than in managing established ones.
5	Autonomy /Independence	Primarily motivated to seek work situations which are maximally free of organizational constraints; wants to set own schedule and own pace of work; is willing to tradeoff opportunities for promotion to have more freedom
6	Service /Dedication to a cause	Primarily motivated to improve the world in some fashion; wants to align work activities with personal values about helping society; more concerned with finding jobs which meet their values than their skills.
7	Pure Challenge	Primarily motivated to overcome major obstacles; solve almost unsolvable problems, or win out over extremely tough opponents; define their careers in terms of daily combat or competition in which winning is everything; very single-minded and intolerant of those without comparable aspirations.
8	Life Style	Primarily motivated to balance career with lifestyle; highly concerned with such issues as paternity or maternity leaves, day care options, etc, looks for organizations that have strong pro family values and norms.

Source: Schein E.H (1990). Career Anchors: Discovering Your Real Values. San Diego, CA; Pfeiffer & Company

Objectives

1. To identify the career anchors preferred by ITES employees in Bangalore.
2. To classify the identified career anchors into eight dimensions such as Technical/ Functional Competence, Managerial Competence, Security and Stability, Entrepreneurial Creativity, Autonomy /Independence, Service /Dedication to a cause, Pure Challenge, Life Style.

Review of literature

Career anchor theory proposed by Schein (1996) states that individuals possess a diverse career interests. It is a set of self-perceptions pertaining to motives and needs, talents and skills, and personal values that is secured in intrinsic side of an individual. The theory also states the reasons for individual's career choices, in order to accomplish his/her self-image. Schein says career aspirations of an individual are influenced by career anchors. These career anchors determine an individual's viewpoint about the future. Schein (1996) had identified eight anchors of career that guides an employee's career aspiration. These career anchors are as follows: Technical/Functional, Managerial, Autonomy, Security, Life style, Sense of service, security, and Entrepreneurial creativity.

IKYA Human Capital Solutions Ltd, MTHR Global and The Academy of HRD(2011) explore the career aspirations, motivations(extrinsic and intrinsic) and values of Gen Y at the workplace, and have shown how these factors impact organizations. The study examined career aspirations and their relationship with motivations (extrinsic and intrinsic) and values (achievement, money and role immersion) of Indian Gen Y at the workplace today. The findings revealed heterogeneity of GenYs' career aspirations, and suggested that the respondents aspired to achieve managerial competence, brand identity, and a sense of service. They were motivated by extrinsic factors (i.e. tangible rewards obtained from external sources such as salary, perks and physical conditions) only marginally, and were mainly motivated by intrinsic factors (i.e. Individuals were intrinsically motivated when they seek enjoyment, interest, satisfaction of curiosity, self-expression, or personal challenge in the work) and they highly valued achievement.

Ramly, Efizah Sofiah and Ismail, Maimunah and Uli, Jegak (2009) in their study showed that R & D professionals aspired the following three aspirations -sense of service, job security and life style integration. It was also found that there was a positive and strongest relationship between the career improvement practices and career aspirations.

Sharon Bender(1963) from his study could find out the various factors that influenced the career choices of female students in high school. Those factors in the order are - Parents, older siblings, other people, work experiences, volunteer experiences and certain school experiences. On the other hand, the findings of this study also revealed that female high school students commonly demonstrated doubts about their academic ability and expressed fears that they would not be successful.

Career Aspirations and Expectations of Black, Mexican American, and White Students by Consuelo Arbona and Diane M. Novy(1991) examined the career aspirations and expectations of Black, Mexican American, and White college freshmen. In addition, students' career expectations were compared to the jobs available in the labor market. Results suggested that (a) there seem to be more gender than ethnic differences in students' career aspirations and expectations, (b) differences in the career aspirations and expectations among Mexican American and White students followed traditional gender patterns, and (c) with some exceptions, the career expectations of students resembled the distribution of jobs in the labor market.

Dr. Parul Saxena, Mr. Rajiv Jain(2012) in their study says that the generation Y professionals generally aspire for brand identity, competence and a sense of service. They are motivated when they have an empathetic supervisor, good work-life balance, sound company policies, and equitable pay. The Indian generation Y highly values achievement in both work and social environment. They love to ask question and despise unnecessary procedure and processes. A generation with strong sense of social concise and purpose, it never loses an opportunity to create their own identity and space.

Mayrhofer, W., Steyrer, J., Meyer, M., Strunk, G., Schiffinger, M. and Iellatchitch, A. (2005), Using the basic distinction between organisational and post-organisational career orientation, examined the preferences of business school graduates for different types of career fields and systematic differences between people with different career orientations in terms of behavioural characteristics as well as personality traits. The results showed that business school graduates clearly distinguish between organisational and post-organisational career fields. Graduates with post-organisational career aspirations display attributes of high flexibility, leadership motivation, selfpromotion/self-assertion, self-monitoring, networking and less self-consciousness. For individuals preferring an organisational career pattern, inverse relationships applied.

According to Paul K. Andoh et al, (2012) to accomplish their career aspirations, most of the girls liked and were willing to study science at higher level. It was observed that majority of the girls aspired to study those areas which were dominated by male. This showed their intention and capability to bridge the gender stereotypification of job roles between males and females.

According to Mayrhofer, W. G. Strunk, M. Schiffinger, A. Iellatchitch, J. Steyrer, and M. Meyer (2003), there was a clear disparity amongst the business school graduates. One group preferred for 'traditional career patterns' and the other for 'post-organizational career patterns'. Those who preferred traditional career patterns clearly tried to stay away from 'old' and 'new' forms of self-employment and did not liked to be a part of any kind of contingent workforce. For those who preferred a post-organizational career pattern, inverse relationships applied.

Research methodology

The study was a cross-sectional descriptive research. The Sample population in this study included employees of ITES companies located in Bangalore. From the list of ITES companies as provided by Bangalore circle, companies listed as Large, medium and small Enterprises were considered for the survey. Non probability sampling technique was considered for the study. Convenience sampling techniques was adopted to gather the responses.

Totally 26 ITES companies in Bangalore participated in the survey. Complete responses were obtained from 300 employees. To design the questionnaire for the career aspirations Schein's (1985) career orientation inventory (40 items), was considered. The questionnaire used in this study is the modification of Schein's career orientation inventory which consisted of 56 items. The questionnaire consisted of two sections. Under Section I, Demographic details such as Name, Age, gender, education, working experience, company name, and personal contact details were asked to describe the sample. In section II, 56 items related to career aspirations were asked. Five point Likert scale was used to rate each item, from 1 which says Never true for me to 5 Always true for me.

Data analysis, findings and interpretation

The demographic details of the professionals who participated in this survey are described below in Table 2.

Table 2.Demographic profile of respondents

Items	Groups/cat-egories	No of re-spondents	Percentage (%)
Gender	Female	183	61
	Male	117	39
	Total	300	100
Age Group (yrs)	21 - 25	124	41
	26 - 30	176	59
	Total	300	100
Education	Graduate	223	74
	Post Graduate	77	26
	Total	300	100
Work Experience(yrs)	1 – 5	170	57
	6 – 10	130	43
	Total	300	100

Descriptive analysis
Table 3: Dimensions of Career Aspirations

Dimensions of Career Aspirations	Count	Mean	Std. Dev.
Autonomy/independence	300	3.69	0.53
Security /stability	300	4.15	0.53
Technical/functional competence	300	4.03	0.52
General Managerial competence	300	3.52	0.63
Entrepreneurial creativity	300	3.84	0.45
Service/Dedication	300	4.18	0.63
Pure challenge	300	3.90	0.47
Life style	300	4.05	0.49

Graph 1: Dimensions of Career Aspirations
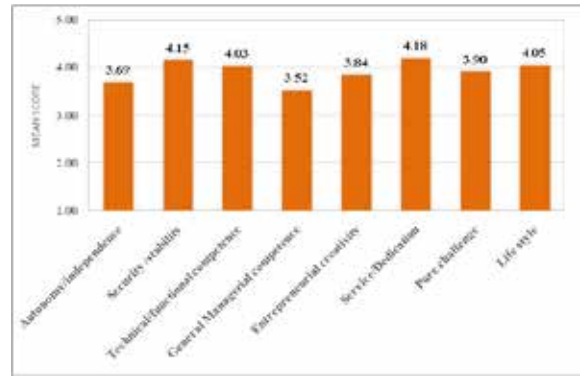
From the above table 2, it could be observed that, Service/ Dedication achieved the highest mean score of 4.18. Security /stability and Life style achieved mean scores of 4.15 and 4.05, respectively, while Technical/functional competence and Pure challenge achieved mean scores of 4.03 and 3.90, respectively, Entrepreneurial creativity, Autonomy/independence and General Managerial competence achieved mean scores of 3.84, 3.69 and 3.52, respectively. From the results we can classify ITES employees under the following dimensions in order service/dedication to a cause followed by security/ stability and then life style.

Conclusion
Identification of career anchors facilitates individuals to understand clearly about their career path. It aids to carry out self assessment through which it contributes to analyze themselves properly as to what they need to do and where they need to proceed. Organizations are also required to understand the expectations of employees in this dynamic business environment to match its objectives with the individual expectations. Organizations can provide an opportunity to its employees to express their interests and in the meantime the employers or management must clearly communicate what is expected out of employees and thus reducing the gap.

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