



RESEARCH ARTICLE

PERCEPTIVE UNDERSTANDING OF CAREER STAGE IN INDIAN CONTEXT: A STUDY IN PETROLEUM AND EDUCATION SECTOR EMPLOYEES

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ABSTRACT

Framing Human Resource policies based on the career stage of an employee is one of the challenges for the policy makers. This study intends to understand the career stage of an employee along with understanding impact of career stage of an employee with respect to the sectors in which they are working. Do employees aspire differently depending on the sectors they are working? For this propose two mutually exclusive and different sectors were selected to carry out the study. The study shows the perceived career stage of an employee differs significantly in Mid career stage which is the most productive age of an employee across two different sectors.

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INTRODUCTION

Two Different sectors totally different in working, different in policies does they have anything common? The present study is about the perception of educationalists working in Indian management Institutes and the management personnel in Indian petroleum sector. Indian management education has registered a rapid growth of Management Institutes offering the programs both at graduate and undergraduate levels after Indian Government has liberalized business education in 1990s. Owing to globalization lot of changes are noticed in the functioning of industries across the world requiring the manpower with multi-skills rather than simply knowledge in specific domain. Top Indian Management institutes are continuously updating the contents and delivery modes to sustain in highly competitive global arena. According to data from the Petroleum Planning and Analysis Cell, Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, the oil and gas sector is among the six core industries in India and plays a major role in influencing decision making for all the other important sections of the economy. Majorly owned by Government being one of the NavRatna companies of India it is expected to be one of the largest contributors to non-OECD petroleum consumption growth globally.

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Total oil imports declined by 10 per cent year-on-year in February 2017. Fuel consumption in India increased by 10.7 per cent to a 16-year high of 196.48 million tons (MT) in 2016. A career can be defined as the sequence of jobs held during one's Professional life. Professional life in current research has been defined as economically working span of an individual as employee or entrepreneur. Professional life of an individual is a web of individuals desire to shape up individuals career with career goal and career planning. Professional life of every individual passes through typical evolutionary phases called career stages. Career planning refers to the process by which employee determines own career objectives and plans the path to achieve those objectives. The process of an employee planning his career goals is known as individual career planning. The process by which the management plans career goals for its employees is known as organizational career planning for the individual employee. Organizations can be benefited from good career planning of its employees. An effective career planning and development program improves the ability of the organization to attract and retain talented personnel. A well-designed career planning program includes evaluation of career needs and career opportunities, and alignment of needs with opportunities. Employees go through certain career problems, despite planning. Some of these problems are caused by dual-career families, low ceiling careers, declining career opportunities, issues of career stages and downsizing etc. In an organization for Career development

of employees the employee needs to be subjected to 'progress through a series of stages, each characterized by a different set of developmental tasks, activities, and relationships. Education sector and Petroleum sector being two different kind of sector this study intends to explore these two diversified sectors. The understanding of career stages and do career stages differ in different types of jobs in different organization will help to understand this complex subject more and at macro level.

Literature review

The career stage has been defined as the various phase of an individual's professional life, which comes in a chronological order. These phases or events may be different in every employee of organizations. Individuals from different occupational groups have to pass through some kind of personal or career related decisions with apparently a fairly predictive sequence. Various research scholars have classified these career stages. According to Super's (1957) theory, there are three stages in a person's vocational career over age 25-65 years: exploration, establishment, and maintenance. As per the different psychological task of each stage. These stages are characterized by various crucial activities and psychological adjustments which people have to make, no matter what their occupation or background. Levinson et al. (1978) identified four "life areas": Childhood (0-20 yrs.), early adulthood (20-40 yrs.), middle adulthood (40-60 yrs.), and late adulthood (over 60 yrs.). On the other hand Mowday *et al.*, (1982) proposed three stages in the development of organizational commitment: a) the pre-entry stage; b) the early employment stage; and c) the middle and late-career stages in the organization. Reichers (1986), concentrated on three stages of development: early, mid, and late-career stages. Brooks and Seers (1991) considered five stages as per age criteria i.e. 18-21, 22-27, 28-32, 33-40, 41 and older. According to Greenhaus, Callanan, and Godshalk (2000), there are five stages in career development: (1) occupational choice: preparation for work, (2) organizational entry, (3) early-career: establishment and achievement, (4) mid-career, and (5) late-career. Either age or the working tenure of an employee are considered for classification of career stage. After studying various research papers across the globe, the researcher concluded the characteristics of different career stages as follows:

Early Career Stage: Employees in early career stage can be identify as employees in the age group of 18 to 30 years of age. The employees in Early career stage is characterized by self-exploring about their careers. It includes the first experience on the job, peer group evaluations, personal tensions and anxieties. An employee rarely gets a chance to handle powerful assignments. This period is characterized by committing mistakes, learning from those mistakes and assuming increased responsibilities also with high employee productivity and career growth. The employee strives for creativity and innovation through new job assignments.

Mid career stage: in the age group of 31 to 45 years an employee are characterized by the following characteristics. The organization can place them on jobs that require experience and maturity. They Continue to show improved performance, till a particular level and then begin to decline. And they are no longer viewed as a learner. Mistakes committed by employee at this stage are viewed seriously and may invite penalties. The person is no longer trying to

establish a place for himself or herself in the organization, but seeks to maintain his or her position.

Late Career Stage: Employees of age group 45 and above are relaxed a bit and plays the part of an elder statesperson. This is the time to command respect from younger employees. Your varied experiences and judgment are greatly valued and your word will carry weight undoubtedly as you can teach others and share your experiences with others. It was observed after intensive literature review that in case of Indian context career stages needs more exploration. It was difficult for the researcher to identify the best career stage model for Indian condition. Thus the research gap has been identified. With the research question "does perceived career stage of two different sectors namely Education and Petroleum are different?"

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Being career stage still undiscovered area in Indian context. and having research gap, the objective of the study is to study the concept of career stage and to find out difference in perceiving career stage in two sectors. Based on above objectives following hypothesis of the study has been framed:

H₀₁: Employees in Education sector are not significantly different with employees of Petroleum sector in their perception of career stages.

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Data Collection

The Data needed for the study was collected through primary data collection method and secondary data collection method. The primary data on Organizational Commitment was collected through structured questionnaires. The secondary data was collected through desk research including literature survey, referring e-libraries etc. The study was conducted on Management cadre employees of Indian Government owned Public Sector Unit in Petroleum sector based in Mumbai and Management faculties of private and deemed university. The collection of primary data on Career Stage was done by the method of questionnaire. In the first part of the questionnaire different questions based on career option, experience and interaction with peer group were asked for three different career stage in a heterogeneous way. The respondents were asked to answer in yes/no options. The questionnaire explained the nature and the purpose of the research and the assurance of complete secrecy of identity of respondent and responses have been given. Also some background information of respondents like tenure in organization, demographic information and working experience was collected in the second part of the questionnaire. The questionnaires were distributed to 100 employees of Petroleum companies and 100 Professors of Management colleges located in Mumbai. Only 85 responded from Petroleum Company and 66 from education sector gave full responses to the questionnaire. For better comparison, the data analysis has done on first correct 65 respondents from both the sectors. i.e. total 130 data has been analyzed. The data collected with the help of the questionnaire was analyzed with the help of statistical package SPSS 20. These mean scores were subjected to various statistical analyses by employing the various statistical tools will be carried out for testing the research hypotheses.

Table 1. Sector

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Education sector	65	50.0	50.0	50.0
	Petroleum sector	65	50.0	50.0	100.0
	Total	130	100.0	100.0	

Table 2. Agewise distribution of respondents in two sectors

		Count		
		Sector		Total
		Education sector	Petroleum sector	
Age	Less than 30 years	23	17	40
	31 years – 45 years	42	26	68
	Greater than 45 years	0	22	22
Total		65	65	130

Table 3. Early career stage perception

		Sector		Total	Chi square value
		Education sector	Petroleum sector		
This is my first job experience.	NO	64	36	100	.000
	YES	1	29	30	
I rarely get chance to handle powerful assignment	NO	34	31	65	.602
	YES	31	34	65	
I am still exploring answer to various puzzling question about my career/ career options.	NO	30	18	48	.029
	YES	35	47	82	
As I have not made a career choice, I am not concerned with achievements, performance and advancement of my own career	NO	63	52	115	.002
	YES	2	13	15	
I am highly concerned about my career growth and motivated to succeed	NO	0	9	9	.002
	YES	65	56	121	
I am unknowingly making mistakes and learning from those mistakes.	NO	2	15	17	.001
	YES	63	50	113	
I don't mind changing my job for better career prospect at any cost.	NO	23	24	47	.857
	YES	42	41	83	
Peer group evaluation, personal tension and anxiety confronts me in order to make my identity in my organization.	NO	38	22	60	.005
	YES	27	43	70	
I seek to assume increased responsibility.	NO	7	2	9	.085
	YES	58	63	121	
I am striving for creativity and innovation through new job assignments.	NO	7	6	13	.772
	YES	58	59	117	

Table 4. Mid career stage perception

		Sector		Total	Anova
		Education sector	Petroleum sector		
I am broadening my interests and capabilities.	No	0	6	6	.012
	Yes	65	59	124	
I am not considered as a learner in my organization.	No	41	43	84	.716
	Yes	24	22	46	
When I make mistakes, they are viewed seriously and sometimes invite penalties as well.	No	36	43	79	.212
	Yes	29	22	51	
I know how many career goals I will attain.	No	13	17	30	.409
	Yes	52	48	100	
I have a feeling of less mobility and attractiveness in the job market.	No	40	51	91	.035
	Yes	25	14	39	
I need some technical updating or develop new job skills in order to avoid early stagnation and decline in my career.	No	10	10	20	1.000
	Yes	55	55	110	
I am dealing with people outside the organization(organization sub units) for the benefit of others inside the organization.	No	15	16	31	.462
	Yes	50	49	99	
I am involved in informal mentoring of my colleagues.	No	18	20	38	.838
	Yes	47	45	92	
I am expected a set established behavioral pattern of mine , by my co-worker and organization.	No	22	4	26	.702
	Yes	63	64	127	
My working relations are changing with my colleagues.	No	5	4	9	.000
	Yes	60	61	121	
My responsibilities are increasing for influencing guiding, directing and developing other people.	No	57	45	102	.563
	Yes	8	20	28	
My organization can place me on jobs that require experience and maturity.	No	65	50	115	.732
	Yes	0	15	15	
I am maintaining my position in the organization.	No	17	18	35	.010
	Yes	48	47	95	
I am worried about my increasing age and physical aging.	No	33	54	87	.000
	Yes	32	11	43	
I am looking for retirement plans.	No	45	32	77	.0845
	Yes	20	33	53	
Sometime I am searching for my new life goals.	No	60	52	112	.000
	Yes	5	13	18	
There is a change in my family relationships.	No	45	21	66	.020
	Yes	20	44	64	

Table 5: Late stage Career perception

		Sector		Total	Anova
		Education sector	Petroleum sector		
I am no longer required to run the race.	No	59	50	109	.032
	Yes	6	15	21	
I can command respect from younger employees.	No	9	5	14	.261
	Yes	56	60	116	
My words carriesweight in business matters.	No	16	10	26	.191
	Yes	49	55	104	
I can teach others and share my experiences with others.	No	0	3	3	.081
	Yes	65	62	127	
My career lessons are important for me.	No	3	6	9	.304
	Yes	62	59	121	
I am one of the elder statesperson of my organization.	No	50	48	98	.687
	Yes	15	17	32	
I am planning for retirement	No	65	53	118	.000
	Yes	0	12	12	
My career lessons are important for me.	No	6	4	10	.541
	Yes	59	61	120	

RESULTS

Data has been analyze on two Indian sectors viz. Education sector and petroleum sector. Demographic information was collected through equal respondents from each sector for fair comparison (Table 1). The age wise classification was made as age less than or equal to 30 are Early career stage employees. Age 30-45 are termed as Mid Career employees and Age greater then 45 years were Late career stage employee. Table 2 represents the crosstab of age wise respondents in respective sectors.

DISCUSSION

Various questions were asked to respondents to answer. Different questions on different career stages were mixed in order to study the perception about their own career stage. The early stage based career stage questions as shown in Table 3. The responses for questions like: This is my first job experience, As I have not made a career choice, I am not concerned with achievements, performance and advancement of my own career, I am highly concerned about my career growth and motivated to succeed, I am unknowingly making mistakes and learning from those mistakes. Peer group evaluation, personal tension and anxiety confronts me in order to make my identity in my organization indicates that there is no significant difference in the perception of Management educational professional and Petroleum Industry professional. Table no. 3. Also indicates that on the statements like I rarely get chance to handle powerful assignment, I am still exploring answer to various puzzling question about my career/ career options, I don't mind changing my job for better career prospect at any cost, I seek to assume increased responsibility and I am striving for creativity and innovation through new job assignments has significant difference in the perception. Table no.4 indicates that the perceptions of employees of both the sectors are same when they are responding to My working relations are changing with my colleagues. I am worried about my increasing age and physical aging. Sometime I am searching for my new life goals. There is a change in my family relationships are significantly different that is The Management professionals thinks differ than Petroleum professional vis a versa. Table 4 indicates that the petroleum professionals and management professionals are same in their perception on the statements like I am broadening my interests and capabilities;

I am not considered as a learner in my organization; When I make mistakes, they are viewed seriously and sometimes invite penalties as well.; I know how many career goals I will attain.; I need some technical updating or develop new job skills in order to avoid early stagnation and decline in my career; I am involved in informal mentoring of my colleagues; I am expected a set established behavioral pattern of mine, by my co-worker and organization.; My responsibilities are increasing for influencing guiding, directing and developing other people; My organization can place me on jobs that require experience and maturity; I am maintaining my position in the organization; I am looking for retirement plans. Table 5 reflects the perception of Petroleum professional and management Institute professionals. The two sectors professionals are significant differ

I am planning for retirement

I am no longer required to run the race.; I can command respect from younger employees; My words carriesweight in business matters; I can teach others and share my experiences with others; My career lessons are important for me and I am one of the elder statesperson of my organization shows professionals of petroleum and education sector does not significantly differ in their perception.

Conclusion

The study shows that two sectors are perceived differently by different career stages of Petroleum and management education sector. Especially in early stage employees the perceptual difference was observed more. The Petroleum sector employees were more down to earth as compared to management education sector reason being management education is more of expressive social sector as compared to Petroleum sector where employees deals with figures and fact. Mid career stage employees of both petroleum and management education sector depicted same kind of perception to the their respective career stages. The little difference is observed due to different organizational policies of respective sectors. As per the personal characteristic parameter like age all the employees has shown the similarities.

Scope for Future Study

Although current study was an attempt to find the perceptual difference between two sectors, similar studies can be

conducted with different sets of organizations with in the industries and across the industries. Further researches can be conducted on service industry and manufacturing industries too to find out employees perception of more interactive employees to employees who less deal with general public some what like front desk employees and backdesk employees.

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