

Examining the Impact of Organizational Structure on Career Anchors of Employees in Public and Private Organizations

Mojtaba Yousefi, Mohammad Reza Behboudi and Mojgan Zarghamifard
Department of Management University, Hormozgan, Iran

Abstract: Many factors influence on career anchor which is very important in human resource development and management. One of the factors that has received less attention is organizational structure. This study investigated the effect of organizational structure on employees' career anchors in Iranian public and private organizations in 2015. In this research, 339 participants were studied from private and public organizations which 153 people of them were from private organizations and 186 people of them were from public organizations. We utilized inferential statistics in the research. The t-test and correlation coefficient were used to generalize the sample to the population. Edgar Shin's in 2006 questionnaire was used to measure the career anchor progress and Frank's questionnaire was used to evaluate the dimensions of organizational structure. The results of the research indicated that there is a negative significant relationship between the components of organizational structure (formality, centralization and complexity) with career anchors in both public and private organizations.

Key words: Career anchors, organizational structure, centralization, formality, complexity

INTRODUCTION

Today, most organizations have been deeply influenced by a highly dynamic environment in which technology, economic conditions, political circumstances and social/cultural values continue to evolve at an ever rapid rate. Schein (1990) stated that these environmental changes make it almost impossible to clearly think about the planning process: "the fundamental problem that all organizations face when they attempt to plan for their human resources is that they have to match the ever changing needs of the organization with the ever changing needs of the employees."

In addition, the most important factor in organizational and entire society is human resources. The development system of human resources in any organization must find new ways for modifying workforce management that have a positive impact on performance and productivity (Mirkamali *et al.*, 2009). No doubt, achieving flexible goals are required adapting development and programs that the circumstances create and focusing on the relationship between organizational structure and career anchors. The existence of effective and self-motivated human force is one of very important issues in current organizations on the other hand, since any system tries to have the maximum effectiveness for its growth, development of human resources are very detriment in organizational achievement.

Today, the employees think and concern about their careers more than past. They want long-term, challenging and confident job and they tend to develop and grow in their jobs. On the other hand, the employees begin often their career with hope of achieving special expectations in an organization and most of them make importance to progress, power and obtaining the maximum rewards and responsibilities (Clark, 2005). It should be noted that there are various factors in this path or career anchors which must be paid attention. According to Ituma and Simpson (2007), few opportunities for promotion, the existence of rough laws and regulations, centralized structures, inflexibility, complexity and more formality lead an employee had been gotten strike in an unfair system. This sense causes an employee finds negative viewpoints about his or her job which will effect negatively on his/her performance. Hence, organizational structure seems to have important role in human recurrence development and their career anchors. The literature review indicated that this topic has been received less attention.

Therefore, the objective of this imperial study is to determine the relationship between organizational structure and career anchors. It is expected that the results reveal the relationships between these two variables and consequently in addition to filling the gap in the literature and theoretical contribution, the study potentially contributes to the advancement of organizational career development practices aimed at

enhancing employees' work experiences and job and career satisfaction. Individuals' job and career satisfaction has been shown to influence their organizational commitment, turnover intentions, motivation and productivity (Coetzee and Schreuder, 2009). Each of the variables will be further explored in the literature review that follows.

According to above explanations, the research is trying to answer this question: is there a significant relationship between organizational structure and career anchors? It should be noted theoretically and conceptually that more formality can repel creativity, autonomy and identification and centralization can lead to isolate and suppress creativity. Answering to all above challenges can be known by conducting the research. According to above explanations, it seems there is a relationship between organizational structure and career anchors. Therefore, the objective of this research is finding the relationship between organizational structure and career anchors, determining the role of structure in progress level of career anchors in private and public organizations and provide some recommended solutions in this regard. In this study, first the relevant literature will be reviewed, then research methodology will be described in the next section. After that the finding will be explained and in final section the discussion of the result as well as implication for practice will be presented.

Research background: Some people are passive spectators in their life stage while others are active actors. Similarly in career path some individuals are more orientated toward their own skills and what they can contribute, while other individual are more inclined to be aware of the limitations of their role in the organization (Schein, 1996). Career path is a motivator for individuals to self-management in their careers. Moreover, those who are actively participating in their jobs can successfully achieve their goals (Verbruggen *et al.*, 2007). Career success requires great deal of information and endeavor that ensure success (Danziger *et al.*, 2008).

Career path represents a chain of career related experiences which individual acquires during time. The concept of career anchor as a balance between the individuals and organizations could be analyze from both external career includes all careers and the successes that individual promote through them while internal career includes orientations, values, perception and effective reactions to job experiences that could have significant outcomes for staff's satisfaction, commitment, performance and retention in the organization.

The concept of career anchor emerged as a result of a 12 year longitudinal study initiated by Schein (1990). In his study, the participants consisted of 44 Massachusetts

Institute of Technology Sloan School Alumni who were interviewed about their work attitudes and values as well as their career choices and changes. As a result, Schein identified some patterns (namely, career anchors) that functioned in a person's worklife as a way of evaluating work experience and underpinning her/his reasons for working and changing jobs. In addition, Schein (1990, 1996) proposed that most people's self-concepts revolved around eight categories reflecting basic values, motives and needs: autonomy/independence, security/stability, technical functional competence, general managerial competence, entrepreneurial creativity, service or dedication to a cause, pure challenge and lifestyle (Unal and Gizir, 2014).

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There is no past empirical support for the effects of discrepancy between career anchors and organizational structure but we overview some of studies about career anchors and other variables.

Wong (2013) selected 117 managers, studied their path careers and determined averagely the importance of dreams or pillars of their career path including life style, entrepreneurial creativity, independence, service, pure challenge, performance technical competency, security, stability and managerial competency.

Rebecca (2007) studied the relationship between career path and job dreams and found that there is a significant relationship between desires or anchors of Shin's career path with emotional, normative and continuous commitment in an organization so that the variables of performance technical competency,

entrepreneurial creativity and independence can be predictors of organizational commitment of an employee.

Chen *et al.* (2010) found more formality imposes different sources of knowledge for producing new productions and services to employees. But low formality leads the employees think more creative to their jobs, seek more information sources and solve different problems. According to them, flexibility and low focus on job regulations lead to create new ideas and more creative behaviors.

Sadeghi studied the relationship between family supports; self-efficiency of career path and self esteem with decision self-efficiency of career path of students. The results of the analysis approved the fitness of assumed model after some adjusted indicators for covariance between the errors related to self-evaluation and goal-setting and showed there is positive significant relationship between family support and self-efficiency on decision self-efficiency of students' career path. There is an indirect effect on family support and self-efficiency through self-esteem. With respect to the importance of decision self-efficiency of career path of first high school to determine educational path in next periods it should be examined the factors affecting on it such as under studied variables in the research.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Regarding the purpose of research, this study is practical and descriptive survey. In the present study, first theoretical principles and background are reviewed which is through investigating published papers and authoritative dissertations. Next in order to collect the data, after getting permissions from the relevant authorities (to be compliance with research ethics) the questionnaires were distributed among all employees working of the public and private organizations in Hormozgan Province, Iran as the participants of this study 339 usable questionnaires were collected and analysed. The time period of the study was in the 2015.

In this survey two instruments were employed; career anchors questionnaire designed by Schein (1996) in the form of 5-point Likert-type scales consisting of 20 questions and organizational structure questionnaire designed by Franks in the form of 5-alternative Likert-type scales questions consisting of 25 questions. The descriptive statistical techniques were utilized to describe collected data comprised of frequency, percentage and mean; also regression analysis and correlation coefficient were used to examine the hypotheses. The SPSS 20 was applied to achieve the purpose. According to data

collection method, the research is a descriptive research, since relationship and being significant of the models have been estimated in it. The research is an applied research in terms of goal and a survey-descriptive research based on data collection. For doing it, questionnaire, description and analysis of the variables have been utilized.

Research hypotheses: This current study examines: the impact of organizational structure on career anchors of employees. The organizational structure is likely to affect the choice of a career anchors, due to the five dimensions of career anchors and dimensions of organizational structure, four major hypothesis hypotheses were proposed and examined:

- There is a significant relationship between formality and career anchors in public and private organizations
- There is a significant relationship between centralization and career anchors in public and private organizations
- There is a significant relationship between complexity and career path in public and private organizations
- There is a significant difference between organizational structure and career anchors of employees in public organizations with private organizations

Research variables: In this study, two variables namely career anchors and organizational structure will be investigated.

Dependent variable; career anchors: When career anchors is created that a person gains his and her life and job experiences and can pierce into thoughts, values and motives and the person do not give up the obstacles. According to Schein (1996) anchors of career anchors are rooted from self-image which is composed three components:

Perceived capabilities and talents, evolved sense towards incentives and main and important values and need which are related to career anchors. First case is related to actual experiences in work setting, while third case is resulted from individual reactions to norms, principles and values that we are faced with it in different social and work achievements (Danziger and Valency, 2006; Verbruggen *et al.*, 2007). Schein (1990)'s typology of career anchors are as follows (Tan and Quek, 2001).

Technical/functional competence: Primarily excited by the content of the work it self; prefers advancement only in

his/her technical or functional area of competence; generally disdains and fears general management as too political.

General 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.

Autonomy/independence: Primarily motivated to seek work situations which are maximally free to organizational constraints; wants to set own schedule and own pace of work is willing to trade-off opportunities for promotion to have more freedom.

Security/stability: Primarily motivated by job security and long-term attachment to one organization; willing to conform and to be fully socialized into an organization's values and norms; tends to dislike travel and relocation.

Entrepreneurial creativity: Primarily motivated by the need to build or create some thing 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.

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.

Pure challenge: Primarily motivated to overcome major obstacles, solve almost unsolvable problems or to 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.

Lifestyle: Primarily motivated to balance career with lifestyle; highly concerned with such issues as paternity/maternity leaves, day-care options, etc.; looks for organizations that have strong pro-family values and programs.

Schein claims that each individual has only one true career anchor which emerges after the person has accumulated a meaningful amount of life and work experiences. Schein's main contribution is that his work describes how a stable career identity is formed and distinguishes this process from initial vocational choice

(Feldman and Bolino, 1996). According to Schein, when individuals achieve congruence between their career anchor and their work, they are more likely to attain positive career outcomes such as job effectiveness, satisfaction and stability. However because people do not always work in jobs that fit their career anchors, large variations in job outcomes occur in the population. On the whole, however, individuals with congruence will most likely achieve higher career outcomes than those who have failed to attain it.

Independent variable, organizational structure: Organizational structure is regarded as one of the main factors to form any organization. Additionally, it makes relationship between all organizational activities and goals, it determines who should be where, who communicates with whom, what approaches and methods should be followed to organization achieves its goals (Hoy and Miskel, 2005; Hoy and Sweetland, 2000). Cyert and March (2007) defined organizational structure as a pattern and map of communications and interactions among sections and components of an organization which determines formal or informal relations of employees, organizational positions, access level to information framework, description of duties, description of jobs, how to allocate sources, laws and regulations, adherence mechanisms, implementation of regulations and make coordination between activities (Ergeneli *et al.*, 2007).

Organizational structure is a pattern or map of communications and interactions among sections and components of an organization. Frank's questionnaire has been used to measure the dimensions of organizational structure.

Complexity: It refers to what extent there is differentiation in an organization (Child, 1972). Daft believes that complexity consists of the number of managerial levels in an organization. Generally, complexity is defined in terms of job titles (scattering jobs into organization), number of hierarchy and managerial levels, educational level, geographical scattering level of organization units.

Formality: It refers to what extent organizational jobs have been standardized (Robbins, 1987). Generally, formality is defined to what extent laws and regulations, instructions, bylaws, description of jobs and description of duties have been paid attention and registered.

Centralization: The 3rd element of organizational structure is centralization. More theorists agree that centralization refers to what extent one decision (financial,

human forces, program and exceptional cases) has been centralized in one point. Additionally, centralization influences on lateral activities of decision (Child, 1972).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this study, the result of data analyses and statically tests of examining the hypotheses is presented.

- H_1 : There is a significant relationship between formality and career anchors of employees in public and private organizations

Reviewing regression coefficient (-0.116) as shown in Table 1, indicated that there is a negative significant relationship between formality and career anchors level at 5% error level. Hence, H_0 is rejected and H_1 is supported (Sig. = 0.000 and <5%). The results indicated that if formality increases, career anchors will decreases. Reviewing determination coefficient of regression model indicated that 5.7% of all changes of career anchors are explainable by formality variable.

- H_2 : There is a significant relationship between centralization and career anchors of employees in public and private organizations

As Table 2 shows, reviewing regression coefficient (-0.189) indicated that there is negative significant relationship between centralization and career anchors at 5% error level. Hence H_0 is rejected and H_1 is supported (Sig. = 0.000 and <5%). The results indicated that if centralization increases in organizations, career anchors of employees will decreases. Also, reviewing determination coefficient of regression model indicated that 12.1% of all changes of career anchors are explainable by centralization variable.

- H_3 : There is a significant relationship between complexity and career anchors of employees in public and private organizations

Reviewing regression coefficient (-0.09) indicated that there is a negative significant relationship between complexity and career anchors of organizations (Table 3). Hence, H_0 is rejected and H_1 is supported (Sig. = 0.000 and <5%). The results indicate that if complexity increases, career anchors will decrease. Also, reviewing determination coefficient of regression model indicated that 14% of all changes of career anchors are explainable by complexity variable.

Table 1: Results of regression model of first hypotheses (dependent variable: Career anchors)

Variables	Regression coefficient	SE	t-statistics	Sig. level
Intercept	2.280	0.114	19.972	0.000
Formality	-0.116	0.032	-3.608	0.000

Determination coefficient = 5.700; F-statistics = 13.019 (0.000); Adjusted determination coefficient = 5.200; Watson-Durbin = 1.711

Table 2: Results of regression model of second hypotheses (dependent variable: Career anchors)

Variables	Regression coefficient	SE	t-statistics	Sig. level
Intercept	3.851	0.123	31.387	0.000
Formality	-0.189	0.034	-5.469	0.000

Determination coefficient = 12.1; F-statistics = 29.909 (0.000); Adjusted determination coefficient = 11.7; Watson-Durbin = 1.735

Table 3: Results of regression model of third hypotheses (dependent variable: Career anchors)

Variables	Regression coefficient	SE	t-statistics	Sig. level
Intercept	2.037	0.054	37.560	0.000
Complexity	-0.090	0.015	-5.934	0.000

Determination coefficient = 14.0; F-statistics = 35.218 (0.000); Adjusted determination coefficient = 13.6; Watson-Durbin = 1.948

Table 4: Results of regression model of fourth hypothesis (independent variable: Career anchors)

Variables	Regression		t-statistics		
	coefficient	No.	SE	Significance	level
Intercept	3.017	339	0.051	33.621	0.000
Centralization					
Public	-0.173	186	0.021	-5.102	0.000
Private	-0.062	153	0.019	-4.003	0.000
Complexity					
Public	-0.231	186	0.012	-5.291	0.000
Private	-0.87	153	0.031	-3.298	0.000
Formality					
Public	-0.118	186	0.034	-5.034	0.000
Private	-0.091	153	0.026	-4.273	0.000

Determination coefficient = 14.0; F-statistics = 35.218 (0.000); Adjusted determination coefficient = 13.6; Watson-Durbin = 1.948

- H_4 : There is a significant difference between organizational structure and career anchors of employees among public and private organizations

The result of testing this hypothesis is shown in Table 4. Reviewing regression coefficient indicated that there is a negative significant effect between organizational structure components and career anchors both public organizations and private organizations. Hence, H_0 is rejected and H_0 is supported (Sig. = 0.000 and <5%). The results indicated if complexity, centralization and formality increase, career anchors will decrease. But, coefficients of organizational structure components have different effect on private and public organizations, so that centralization, complexity and formality in public organization have more negative effect on career anchors than private organization.

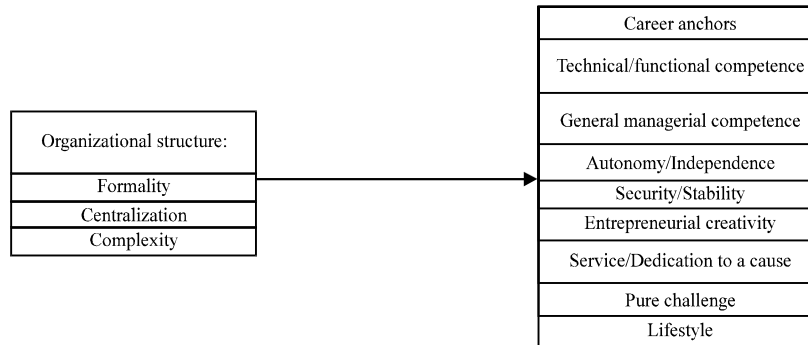


Fig. 1: Effect of organizational structure on career anchors

CONCLUSION

Current organizations must be managed in completely competitive environment along with ongoing developments. In such conditions, managers have few opportunities to control the employees. They should spend the maximum of their time and energy to identify internal and external organizational environment and delegate routine duties on employees. Employees cannot do well their duties and achieve organizational, unless they have needed knowledge, capability and skill and recognize well organizational goals. Also, the existence of self-motivated and efficient human resource is one of the very important factor in this respect. In this condition, an organization should have appropriate structure to develop employees in their career anchors.

Almost all organizations claim to serve the best interests of employees. In practice, they “manage” their workers’ careers with the best interest of the organization, not the employees. Very often, people tend to select a wrong career and find it incompatible at workplaces with their true values, resulting in feelings of unrest and discontent and lost in productivity. This necessitates becoming self-reliant, to choose and manage one’ career. Career anchors help an individual in conceptualising his own perceived career. It encompasses one’s core areas of competence, motives and career values.

The purpose of this research is to help organizations to become more aware so that they can design and plane their organizational structure around career pathing and career development. We make the assumption that organizational structure to maintain effectiveness in increasingly dynamic environments will need to matched to people career anchors. According to above explanations, here we discuss the results of the stud. The study found that there is a significant relationship between formality and career anchors of employees in public and private organizations. To analyze the

hypothesis it should be noted that with more formality in organizations, employee’s career anchors leads to decline. Since, an employee during his/her career anchors should gain different experiences to cycle properly from beginning to end and satisfies in retirement period and leaves with consent politic arena as a successful politicians. But, standardizing organizations and authorizing guidelines and boring resolutions from up to down for normalizing employees’ behaviors can be regarded important factors to decline career anchors. On the other side, the existence of more formality, for standardizing employees’ behaviors, influences strongly the components of career anchors, avoids growing and fulfilling technical and managerial competency, independence and Autonomy and employee is directed towards frustration, trauma and monotony. All these cases influence on career anchors both public organizations and private organizations. The important point is that the trend cannot contribute companies to achieve competitive advantage because of the turbulence of organizational environments. More current theories focus on attention to employees in terms of organizational knowledge and organization capitals. If these sources are received properly attention and utilized appropriately their capacities they can be closed to success. The result of the research is compatible with the result of the research conducted by Kessler (2007) indicating organizational structure (centralization, complexity and formality) influence on career anchors. Also, similar to the research done by Danziger and Valency (2006), the hypothesis indicated that there is a positive significant relationship between career anchors based on Schein and organizational structure (Fig. 1).

Testing the second hypothesis indicated that there is a significant relationship between centralization and career anchors of employees in public and private organizations. For analyzing the hypothesis, it should be noted that if centralization is increased in an organization, employees’ career anchors is decreased and declined,

because more centralization leads to reduce Autonomy, creativity, managerial and technical competencies, motivating job. In such conditions, employee will not follow properly career anchors and reluctance always to be associated with him, insofar as he still unhappy after retirement. The reason for this is that when an employee recall his memories. Maybe all what that he was interested in or his desires about his job, he has not gained as it should be.

As H₃, there is a significant relationship complexity and career anchors of employees in public and private organizations. To analyze the hypothesis, it should be noted that if complexity, referring to various organizational levels from up to down, is increased, autonomy, independence, creativity and items related to career anchors will be reduced. The topic indicates the fact that because of existence of vertical levels from up to down and horizontal levels of specialists, the employee might don't gain proper experience in organization. This can lead permanent reluctance in the employees and influences strongly career anchors. Consider an employee in an organization that is faced continuously with issued bylaws and instructions and has not any autonomy; the employee behaves in terms of administrative affairs and organizational structure over the time and loses his needed flexibility. Apart from that it can be how much harmful for the organization among other rivals, but it can influence strongly on the employees. Let to consider the issue from career anchors perspective. The components of career anchors (technical competency, managerial competency, independence, security and stability, creativity and entrepreneurship, pure challenges and life style) can be impacted by complexity. The event challenges the employee's career anchors and reduces needed incentive for following career anchors, since if number of organizational levels and jobs art more into organization it leads confusion among the employees. The topic can show more itself when that one organization is managed for long years based on this approach in terms of activity nature. It can impact the employee who tries to follow proper career anchors. One employee always intended and intends to be retired along with inner satisfaction sense and total job satisfaction, rather than after retirement, he experiences stress with thinking about his career anchors. The result of the research is compatible with the result of the research done by Samie indicating there is a significant relationship between job and life satisfaction with career anchors success.

Examining the last hypothesis revealed that there is a significant difference between organizational structure and career anchors of employees in public and private organizations. For analyzing the hypothesis it should be noted that the components of organizational structure in

public organization have more negative effect on career anchors while these effects are negative in private organization but its effect is somewhat lower than public organization because of its nature, public organization has more hierarchy, formality, centralization and complexity. In the case, the employees' career anchors working in this structure will be influenced certainly. But in private organization, because of nature of its activities and more transparency, its negative effect is lower than public organization. The reason of being negative is that many apparently-private companies are still managed by government and or several years that have been privatized. This encompasses whole administrative system of our country that has not needed flexibility. In such circumstances, employees' career anchors is influenced along with other research variables such as satisfaction, commitment, citizenship behavior and so on.

IMPLICATIONS

Based on the finding of this study it is recommended that organizations reduce their formality, centralization and complexity of their job to improve the main items of career anchors for employees. It is recommended to implement special programs in organizations on the career anchors of employees. Public organizations and companies by adopting programs such as collaborative training programs, training of decision-making, problem solving, self-leadership styles move toward decentralization in organizations.

In addition, organizations used to standardize the behavior of their employees through formalities and the multiplicity of regulations and guidelines in organizations whereas in today organizations these type of organizing due to environmental turbulence is not so well received because it is believed they affect the independence and freedom of employees and inhibit their growth and prosperity.

Finally as much as possible, it is recommended that organizations reduce complexity in the organization. Of course, it should be noted that organizations that have extensive manufacturing and service processes, inevitably face the complexity problem but what is particularly notable is that this complexity should not be ignored. It is suggested that organizations use the proper information systems in organization and keep individuals and employees within posted.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Future research can study the difference between the perspectives of management theoreticians with employees

and experienced managers or practitioners in relation to career anchor and its role on performance and job satisfaction. In addition, it is recommended that in public organizations and private organizations researchers for more productivity check flexible structures against non-flexible structures. Finally, studying public sector and private sector managers' attitudes can be useful in changing organizational structures.

LIMITATIONS

Every research may suffer from some limitations. In this study one of the main limitation of was coordination problem with public and private organizations to access information and lack of cooperation of some organizations with researchers. Another limitation with this study and other researches in human sciences which are qualitative in nature was quantifying the individuals and behavioral characteristics in order to measure variables. Also another limitation of the research was explaining and justifying the participants for answering the questions in the questionnaire and lack of their enough knowledge about human resources, especially organizational structure and goals of the organization in which they operate.

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