

Relationship Between the Career Stages of an Employee and Their Needs

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Abstract

A career is a lifelong process that includes the preparation for and choice of a specific occupation. It is used to refer to the choice of the specific profession or vertical advancement in an organization. It also refers to the series of work-related positions occupied by an individual throughout his life and the associated activities, behaviors, attitudes, values and aspirations.

Career success is no longer measured in terms of vertical advancement in the hierarchy or increasing salary levels. It is now characterized by the achievement of one's full potential, and the ability to face challenges and assume greater responsibility, along with increased autonomy. The relationship between needs of an employee and work behaviour is moderated by the career stage. To explain the career dynamics of the employees several models have been developed by the researchers. These career stages are based on chronological age. Working life of every individual passes through typical evolutionary phases called career stages. The objective of the researcher is to give relationship between existing career stages of an employee and their needs. In this research, researcher is trying to identify the needs of employees at different stages of career development and the extent to which they are met. For this researcher has taken Cron and Super's career stage models for the reference.

Keywords: - Career, Career Success, Career Stage, Needs of employees, Career development.

Introduction

Career is progress or general course of action of a person in some profession or in an organization. Career includes the specific jobs that a person performs, the kinds of responsibilities and activities that comprise those jobs, movements and transitions between jobs, and an individual's overall assessment of and feelings of satisfaction with companies of their career. (Aswathappa, 2007)

Hall (1976) defines career as 'the individually perceived sequence of attitude and behaviors associated with work related experiences and activities over the span of a person's life.'

Working life of every individual passes through typical evolutionary phases called career stages. People pass through specific career stages during their life span. These stages are characterized by various crucial activities and psychological adjustments which people have to make, no matter what is their occupation or background. During that period individual seeks out to his or her needs, values, and aspirations.

The purpose of this research is to acquire deeper insight into the major career stages proposed by various eminent researchers vis a vis identifying the career needs associated with these stages. The entire exposition is supported by relevant literature review. So, the study is exploratory in nature.

Development in a career refers to the changes that will occur over an adult's life with respect to motives, needs, abilities, attitudes, and values related to work and occupation.

Career Stages are concerned with the world of work and involve work related behaviours through which the individuals seek to define clarity or fulfil their psychological make-up, needs and values. One way to

analyse career is to discuss their various stages, each stage of an individual's career is characterized by unique concerns, needs, and challenges.

Objective of the research

1. Study and identify the career stage of an employee based on different career stage models.
2. Identify the employee's needs on the bases of their career stages they belong to.
3. Draw the relationship between employee needs and the career stages.

Career stage models

Erickson developed five life stages in his life stages model-Childhood (Age 0-15), Adolescence (age 16-24), Young adulthood (age 25-39), Adulthood (age 40-64) and Maturity (age 65 above) years.

Levinson, (1978) started the life stages right from the time they leave their family for the first time for career advancement to the phase of adulthood. This model is divided into six stages-Early Adult Transition stage (Age 18-22), Movement into adult world: structure building (age 23-28), Transition (age 29-32), Setting down and further structuring (age 33-40), again Transition (age 38-42) and last Imitation and middle adulthood (age above 40s) years.

Super (1978) gave his life stage model .He divided it into five stages -Growth (1-14), Exploration (15-24), Establishment (25-44),Maintenance (45-64)and Decline (65 above) years. Its first stage i.e. Growth very much similar to the childhood phase given by Erickson. The next stage is Exploration, in which an individual tries to choose the best suitable and correct occupation. Super's exploration stage can be best associated with early transition in Levinson and Adolescence in the Erickson's model. Establishment is the stage in which an individual searches for an identity and aim of his /her life. It is moreover similar to the Erickson's young adulthood stage. In maintenance stage, an individual looks for self esteem internal and external factors. Based on the experience the individual accepts or changes his current job. It is similar to Erickson's Adulthood stage and Levinson's middle adulthood stage. In Decline stage it is very difficult to motivate the individual. In a way, it is the stage of self actualization, It is similar to Maturity stage of Erickson's model.

Cron (1984) developed career concerns in the form of career stages. Career objectives, developmental tasks, personal challenges, and psychosocial needs of each career stage are discussed, and propositions are developed regarding the influence of career stages on employee's effectiveness. Although common age ranges are associated with each stage, a variety of career, personal, and life factors combine to determine the exact time when an individual moves from one stage to the next.

Erickson

- Childhood (Age 0-15)
- Adolescence (age 16-24)
- Young adulthood (age 25-39)
- Adulthood (age 40-64)
- Maturity (age 65 above)

Super

- Growth (1-14)
- Exploration (15-24)
- Establishment (25-44)
- Maintenance (45-64)
- Decline (65 above)

Picture2: Comparative Picture of Erickson's, and Super's Career Models

Importance of identifying the employees need for the organization

Career development activities need to be integrated with specific career needs of the employees at each career stages. Needs of an employee varies from one career stage to the other career stages, so it is important to identify employee's right career stage. It is also needed for the following reasons:-

1. If an employer knows the needs of their employees, they can motivate them by fulfilling their needs.
2. If employee's needs are fulfilled by the employer, the employee will try to put more efforts which lead the productivity of the organization.
3. By the satisfying employees needs on time it creates a healthy environment in the origination and satisfy the employees.
4. It reduces the iteration rate in the organization. This saves the cost and brings efficiency and effectiveness in the business processes.
5. And if employee reaches to the lower order needs (physiological, social and safety), we can motivate them by fulfilling their higher order needs (self-actualization, self-esteem), according to the Maslow's theory of motivation.

Relation between career stage of an employee and their needs

The relationship between needs of an employee and work behaviour is moderated by the career stage. To explain the career dynamics of the employees several models have been developed by the researchers. These career stages are based on chronological age. Attitude and behaviour of individuals are influenced by their experiences of the environment and by changes in these experiences as they grow older, which is influenced by the career stages.

If career stages can be identified properly, the needs of the employee can be easily predict. The needs of an employee are influenced by the career stages. And to identify the employee's need is important for an employer to retain the good performer employee, to motivate them and to increase their productivity.

The following tabular presentation briefly describes the various career stages and needs related to them.

S.No.	Career stage	Age	Needs
1	Exploration	20-30	Support. Peer Acceptance. Challenging Position.
2	Establishment	30-45	Achievement. Esteem. Autonomy. Competition.
3	Maintenance	Late Thirties to Mid-Forties	Reduced Competitiveness. Security. Helping Younger Colleagues
4	Disengagement	Late Forties to Retirement	Detachment from Organization and Organizational Life.

Table 1: Cron's model of career stages of an individual along with its respective needs.

Findings and conclusion

Following are the findings on the basis of the literature review done by the researcher:-

- 1.It is necessary to adapt any one career stage model to identify the employee's career stage. Selection of the career stage model for the origination should be on the basis of the business process in the origination and the profile of their employees.
2. On the basis of employee's career stage they belong to, identify their career needs and by fulfilling their needs, organization can motivate their employees.

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