

Studying the impact of career orientation on employees' self-efficacy at Qom Governor-General Office

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ABSTRACT: Today, career orientation is an important factor in employees' career development. Identifying career orientation and individuals' propensity to select their careers are considered as necessary initiatives in planning job career. As a cognitive factor, self-efficacy can help employees and pave the ground for their success. Present research studies the impact of career orientation on employees' self-efficacy at Qom Governor-General Office. Research method is a survey-descriptive one. Factor analysis test and LISREL software are used to test research hypotheses. Statistical population consists of all 279 managers and staff of Qom Governor – General Office. Research findings show that all hypotheses are supported and employees' career orientation impacts on their self-efficacy directly. Freedman's test is used to rank career orientation constituents which show that there is a significant difference among career orientation constituents in Qom Governor – General Office. Functional and technical competency and managerial general competencies have the highest priority.

KEYWORDS: career orientation, self-efficacy, employees of Qom Governor General Office.

1 INTRODUCTION

Career is not a recent term used in HR development field. Rather, in a traditional insight, it refers to a path for continuous successes which involves individuals' job life. Emsi Legan (1989) conceptualizes career development as one of the three specialized fields in HR development. Employees' career development is too vital so that it can determine staff job expectations, career priorities and job orientation. One of the concepts of job development is job orientation. Parsons and Shawn (2002) clarified that career orientation highly impacts on career development and increases employees' motivation and propensity to perform their tasks in the best manner. Powel and Butterfield (2002) define career orientation as people's tendency to future jobs. Career orientation is an internal aspect of career which determines job success [1].

1.1 THE CONCEPT OF CAREER ORIENTATION

Career determines the nature of learning cycle which people experience in their career life. People choose careers that are compatible to their beliefs and insights on types of careers. Schein (1996) says that most people shape a strong self-image of their job identity which orient their wishes toward their job and assignments. Schein (1996) has named such self-image as career pillar and, according to his researches; he says that it shapes professional life of job choices. He explains

that the concepts of career pillar have three dimensions: conceived capabilities and talents based on real successes in job positions, conceived values and attitudes based on real interaction between self and used norms and values in organization and, more importantly, motivations and needs met by people in their career [2]. The concept of career pillar is an important issue that encourages different researchers to broad studies in this field. In his studies, Schein (1987) divided career orientation to eight career pillars including technical/functional competence, general managerial competence, autonomy/independence, security/stability, entrepreneurial creativity, service/dedication to a cause, lifestyle, pure challenge[3], [4], [5]. That these are expounded below:

- 1. Technical /functional competence:** Schein (1990) states that, an individual holding technical orientation is primarily excited by the content of the work itself; prefers advancement only in his/her technical or functional area of competence; generally disdains and fears general management as too political. Schein (1887) further states that, this group wants work to be challenging and that if the work doesn't test the individual's ability; it quickly becomes boring and demeaning and regarding pays and benefits, technical and functional people want to be paid to their skill level, often defined by education and work experience[6].
- 2. General managerial competence:** Schein (1990) states that an individual who belongs in this group is 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; and is stimulated (rather than exhausted) by crisis situation [7]. To this end, Field (2003) states that, due to their finely tuned interpersonal skills, the people in this group may be the easiest to talk to. They know how to lobby, they're good at politics, and they can read verbal and nonverbal cues [8].
- 3. Autonomy/independence:** Schein (1990) states that, an individual who belongs in this group is 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[9](Schein, 1996). The autonomy anchored person prefers clearly delineated, time bounded kind of work within his /her area of expertise. Individuals with this career anchor just want to be alone [10].
- 4. Security/stability:** This anchor applies to an individual who is 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 [11]. Security anchored persons prefer stable, predictable work and are more concerned about the context of the work than the nature of the work itself. To this end Schein (1887), states that an individual in this group prefers to be paid in steady predictable increment based on length of service [12].
- 5. Entrepreneurial creativity:** Refers to an individual primarily motivated by the need to build or 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; require encouragements to keep coming up with new ideas. Further, individuals in this group tend to be fairly self-centered and they want money. He or she would want power and the freedom to move in to whatever roles would meet personal needs [13].
- 6. Service/dedication to a cause:** Refers to an individual 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. Individuals in this group focus on the aspect of the job that they most value; and look for projects that match their area of concern [14]. The need to focus work around a specific set of values is the major issue for employees with this career anchor [13].
- 7. Lifestyle:** This anchor applies to an individual who 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 [15]. Individuals who are oriented to lifestyle integration desire to develop a lifestyle that integrates family concerns, career concerns, and concerns for self-development. These people work to live; they don't live to work, so they don't go beyond the basic requirements or job description. Working out a flexible schedule is the most effective reward for them [16].
- 8. Pure challenge:** This anchor applies to an individual who is primarily motivated to overcome major obstacles, solve almost unsolvable problems. They want to work on a particularly challenging assignment in addition to their regular duties. For these people, the challenge is the reward, not words of praise [17], [18].

1.2 SELF-EFFICACY

During past two decades, self-efficacy is emerged as an important motivational construct in human behavior study especially at workplace [19]. Self-efficacy is the central construct of social cognitive theory by Bandura and points to conceived capability of a person to perform a given action [20]. Shower et al (2005) defined self-efficacy as one's believes in successful performing of activities that are necessary to achieve personal aims [21]. Bandura (1997) says that self-efficacy impacts on people's choices, their methods, their efforts and their perseverance and flexibility. It helps people to decide on

the amount of their efforts on doing their affairs; on how long they continue their efforts when they face with problems and on how to be resilience in hurting situations [22]. As a personality variable, self-efficacy plays a vital role in facing with life problems [23]. In fact, one can say that more self-belief, more possibility of involving and sustainability in one's task – related behavior [24]. Some authors distinguish between general and self – belief. General self-efficacy points out one's believe on doing the affairs successfully in different situations. Special self-efficacy refers to Bandura's conception on believing in performing specialized tasks successfully [25], [26]. Bandura (1997) clarifies that one can develop self –efficacy through four routes: functional domination, verbal encouragement, successive modeling and physiological stimulation [27]. Self – efficacy theory has been progressed to expound people's differences in achieving their goals [28]. Self – efficacy is introduced to improve and influence over individuals' working motivation and performance. The lack of self – efficacy and motivation to perform job-related tasks successfully and pursuing job-related opportunities may cause problems for people to achieve their expected results and actions [29]. Overall, in contrary to personality traits that are highly positive, self – efficacy is dynamic. It can be changed overtime through new information, experiences and learning [30].

2 RESEARCH CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Considering research title, following conceptual model is provided.

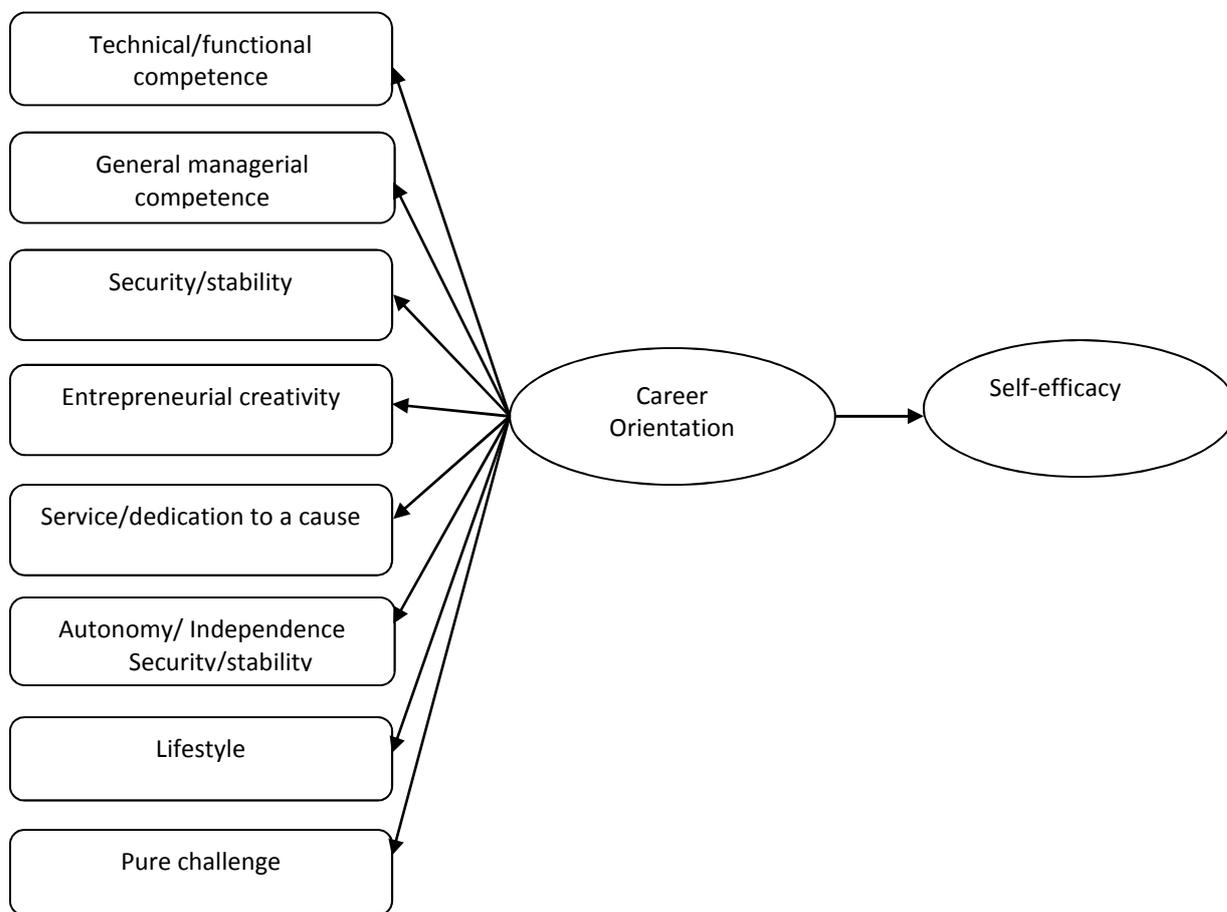


Fig 1: Research hypotheses based on conceptual model

Following hypotheses are provided by considering provided model.

Major hypothesis: Staff career orientation impacts on their self – efficacy directly;

Minor hypotheses:

1. Functional and technical competency impacts on staff self – efficacy directly.
2. General managerial competence impacts on staff self – efficacy directly.
3. Security/stability impacts on staff self – efficacy directly.

4. Entrepreneurial creativity impacts on staff self – efficacy directly.
5. Service/dedication to a cause impacts on staff self – efficacy directly.
6. Autonomy/independence impacts on staff self – efficacy directly.
7. Lifestyle impacts on staff self – efficacy directly.
8. Pure challenge impacts on staff self – efficacy directly.

3 METHODOLOGY

In terms of purpose, this is an applied research and in terms of data collection, it is a descriptive survey type (non-pilot) one. Research statistical population consists of all managers and staff (400) at Qom Governor General Office. By using Kokaran formula, statistical sample volume is 279 and after disseminating 300 questionnaires among managers and staff, 280 questionnaires were finally gathered and analyzed.

$$n = \frac{NZ^2(\frac{\alpha}{2})\delta^2}{(N-1)\epsilon^2 + Z^2(\frac{\alpha}{2})\delta^2} \quad n = \frac{(400)(1/96)^2(0/601)}{(399)(0/05)^2 + (1/96)^2(0/601)} \approx 279$$

Used tool in present study is questionnaire. To measure job orientation, 40-item questionnaire developed by Bigliardi et al (2005) as well as Likert-scale were used which included 9 subscales: technical/functional competency; managerial general competency; job security; entrepreneurial creativity; service or effect; self-authorization and independence; stability; and integrity challenge. Each constituent has five questions. A 17-item questionnaire developed by Sheerer et al (1982) is used to measure self-belief [31]. Since used standards are standard, their validity and reliability are confirmed. For more confidence on reliability, however, Chronbach’s alpha is used. Its figure is 0.978 for career orientation questionnaire and 0.958 for self-efficacy questionnaire. Since these figure are greater than 0.70, one can say that research tool reliability is confirmed.

4 DATA ANALYSIS

Factor analysis test and LISREL software are used to test research hypotheses. Below, research conceptual model is discussed in two states: numerical significance and standard estimation.

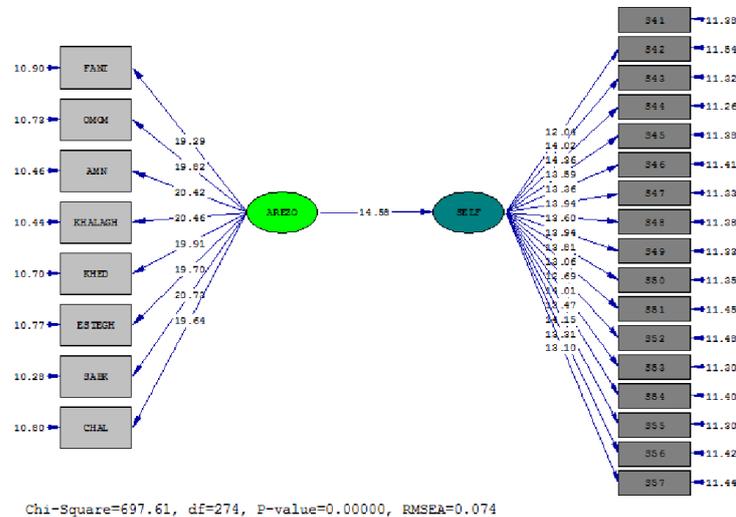


Fig 2: research conceptual model in numerical significance

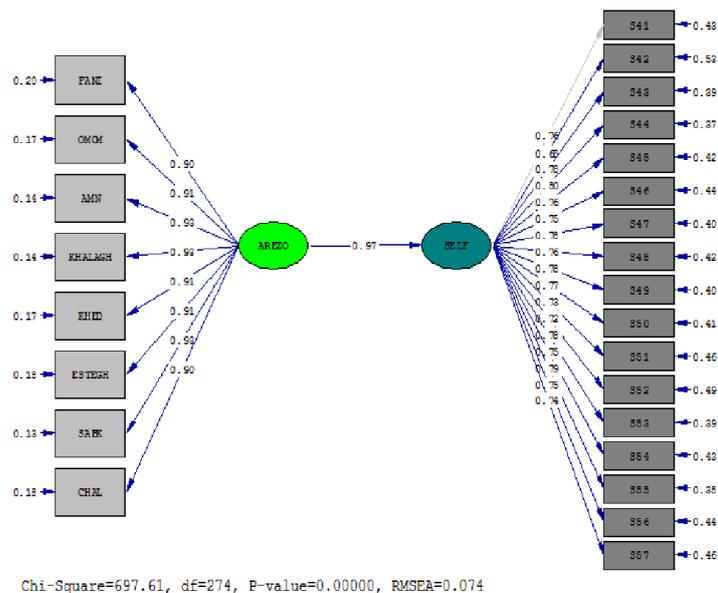


Fig 3: research conceptual model in standard estimation

Tab1: research conceptual model fitness indicators

Indicators	RMSEA	P-Value	Df	Chi-Square
Rates	0.074	0.00000	274	697/61

Before testing research hypotheses, one should initially study the overall fitness of research conceptual model. The best indicator in LISREL is $\frac{X^2}{df}$ and when it is less than 3, the fitness of the model is better. This rate is 2.54 in present study conceptual model which shows a good fitness. Another indicator is RMSEA. It is built based on model errors. When its rate is less than 0.05, it shows that the model has a good fitness. If the rate is between 0.05 and 0.08, the fitness is plausible, if it is between 0.08 and 0.1, the fitness is medium and if it is greater than 0.1, the fitness is weak. In the conceptual model of present study, obtained RMSEA indicates its fitness is plausible. Regarding P-Value, some believe that it should be greater than 0.5 and others accept a figure less than 0.5. Overall, there is no global concurrence on this indicator. Standard ratios and significant numbers are used to confirm or reject the hypotheses. Significant number in LISREL is the same Sig in SPSS software. The difference is that a number should be greater than 1.96 or less than -1.96 in order to be significant and this figure is used to confirm or reject research hypotheses. When this figure is greater than 1.96, it shows that dependent variable has a strong impact on independent variable. Standard ratio means binary correlation rates (between two variables). It is used to compare the impact of model elements. When its rate increases, it means that dependent variable has a strong impact on independent variable. If it is greater than 0.3, this ratio is medium, if it is between 0.3 and 0.6 it is good and if it is greater than 0.6, this ratio is excellent. The results of research model concept in both significant numbers and standard estimation are outlined in table 2. According to findings, one can say that research hypotheses are supported in 95% confidence level.

Tab 2: the results of structural equations model (path analysis)

Hypothesis	Path		Standard ratio	T - Value
Major	Career orientation	Self-efficacy	0/97	14/58
Minor 1	Functional and technical competency	Self-efficacy	0/90	19/29
Minor 2	General managerial competence	Self-efficacy	0/91	19/82
Minor 3	Autonomy/independence	Self-efficacy	0/93	20/42
Minor 4	Entrepreneurial creativity	Self-efficacy	0/93	20/46
Minor 5	Service/dedication to a cause	Self-efficacy	0/91	19/91
Minor 6	Security/stability	Self-efficacy	0/91	19/70
Minor 7	Lifestyle	Self-efficacy	0/93	20/73
Minor 8	Pure challenge	Self-efficacy	0/90	19/64

Freedman test is used to rank career orientation constituents. The findings are outlined in tables 3 and 4.

H_0 : there is no significant difference on the status quo of career orientation constituents.

H_1 : there is a significant difference on the status quo of career orientation constituents.

Table 3 shows that the significance level of the test is 0.05 less than determined significance level. Therefore, H_0 is refused and H_1 is supported. By 95% confidence level, one can say that there is a significant difference on the status quo of career orientation constituents in Qom Governor General Office. In terms of priority, the constituents are outlined in table 4.

Tab 3: Freedman test on the significance of career orientation constituents

Computed rates	Statistical indicators
280	Quantity
64.99	Chi ²
7	Freedom degree
0.0000	Sig

Tab 4: ranking career orientation constituents

Priority	Career orientation constituents	Rank average
1	Functional and technical competency	5/45
2	General managerial competence	4/69
3	Security/stability	4/44
4	Entrepreneurial creativity	4/39
5	Service/dedication to a cause	4/36
6	Autonomy/independence	4/34
7	Lifestyle	4/31
8	Pure challenge	4/03

5 CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

The results of structural equations show that career orientation impacts on employees' self-efficacy directly. Functional/technical competency impacts on employees' self-efficacy directly. It means that functional/technical workers demand progress in technical and functional areas and honor what they know. General management competency impacts on

employees' self-efficacy directly. It means that managerial-oriented employees lead and supervise other people and look for promotion. They develop their general management traits and impact on other employees' capabilities to perform their jobs successfully. Propensity to self-authority impacts on employees' self-efficacy directly. It means that employees demand the maximum freedom and independence and arrange their schedules in a manner by which sharing opportunities are increased and more freedom is achievable. Job security/stability impacts on employees' self-efficacy directly. It means that employees look for stable and predictable jobs and they prefer seniority-based promotion system so that people can use their capabilities to perform their jobs. Entrepreneurial creativity impacts on employees' self-efficacy directly. It means that employees look for new ideas and new businesses. They try to meet their personal needs by their skills and capabilities and to perform their jobs successfully. Tendency to serve or being influential impacts on employees' self-efficacy directly. It means that employees like to help others and try to contribute in philanthropic affairs. Lifestyle impacts on employees' self-efficacy directly. It means that employees try to make equilibrium between their job and life. They should be flexible to overcome the conflicts between job and life, to merge their job and familial interests and to show that they can enhance their own abilities. Integrity challenge impacts on employees' self-efficacy directly. It means that employees look for overcoming important problems, resolving unsolved barriers and increasing their abilities to perform their tasks.

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