

THE RELATION BETWEEN CAREER ANCHORS, OCCUPATIONAL TYPES AND JOB SATISFACTION OF MIDCAREER EMPLOYEES

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this research was to determine the value of the career anchor model in career decision-making. Career models that can provide the individual with greater self-insight can serve as an important guide when making career choices in today's turbulent working environment. Two hundred and ninety-five midcareer employees (managerial and non-managerial) completed questionnaires to determine their career anchor, occupation type and levels of general, intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction. The differences in job satisfaction between employees with a fit between career anchor and occupational type and those with no such fit were compared. It was found that respondents with a fit had a significantly higher level of general and intrinsic job satisfaction than those with no such fit. It is therefore suggested that the career anchor construct could probably serve as a useful tool for midcareer employees to make career choices.

OPSOMMING

Die doel van hierdie ondersoek was om die waarde van die loopbaanankermodel in loopbaanbesluitneming te bepaal. Loopbaanmodelle wat individue van groter insig kan voorsien kan as 'n belangrike riglyn in vandag se turbulente werksomgewing dien. Tweehonderd vyf-en-negentig middelloopbaan-werknemers (bestuur en nie-bestuur) het vraelyste voltooi om hulle loopbaanankers, beroepstipe en vlakke van algemene, intrinsieke en ekstrinsieke werkstevredenheid te bepaal. Die verskille in werkstevredenheid tussen werknemers met 'n passing tussen loopbaananker en beroepstipe en dié sonder 'n sodanige passing, is vergelyk. Daar is bevind dat respondente met 'n passing 'n beduidende hoër vlak van algemene en intrinsieke werkstevredenheid het as dié sonder so 'n passing. Daar word derhalwe voorgestel dat die loopbaanankermodel waarskynlik as 'n nuttige instrument by middelloopbaan-werknemers gebruik kan word om loopbaanbesluite te neem.

The traditional concept of a career that spans a lifetime doing one type of work in one organisation no longer exists. Job changes are necessary and it is likely that an individual may have three or four careers during the span of his work life (Arthur, 1992; Hall & Mirvis, 1995a; Schein, 1993b; Super, 1992). The responsibility of career management in a 'contemporary career' falls on the individual himself. In order to make the right choices, self-insight is required (Schein, 1990).

Research on contemporary careers indicates that self-insight is achievable not only by understanding the career choices an individual makes, but also by understanding why he¹ makes them and how he feels about them (Arthur, 1992; Collin & Young, 1986; Feldman, 1988; Hall, 1976; Kaplan, 1990; Savickas, 1992; Schein, 1990). There has therefore been an increasing emphasis on the distinction between an internal and external career. "The internal career involves a subjective sense of where one is going in one's work life, as opposed to the external career, the formal stages and roles defined by organisational policies and social concepts of what an individual can expect in the organisational structure" (Schein, 1996, p 80). For the individual to adapt to the fast-changing environment, there is a need to shift from external to internal career thinking, i.e. to cease interpreting careers according to organisational position and status and rather rely on a personal interpretation of one's shifting and cumulative work experience (Arthur, 1992). By viewing careers from a subjective perspective, the accuracy of predicting a match between the individual and his occupation can probably be increased (Savickas, 1992).

The midcareer period is highlighted by career development theorists as having a large impact on the career of the individual. This period is significant in that it is a period of assessment for the individual and may provide opportunities for growth as well as stress. Levinson, Darrow, Klein, Levinson and Mckee (1978) believe that at this time, it is common for

the individual to ask what it is he really wants and he has the opportunity to make some judgement of relative success or failure in meeting goals. Research on career psychology often contains references to this stage as problematic, in fact in most instances it is referred to as a midcareer or midlife crisis (Bailyn, 1977; Schein, 1978; Sheehy, 1976; Levinson et al, 1978).

It is therefore common that during this phase, the individual will begin to decide what he really wants and how much he is willing to sacrifice to achieve his goals. He may learn to recognise those aspects of himself that are most central to his character, in other words, those aspects of his career that he would not give up if a choice had to be made (Dessler, 1981).

Through the interaction between himself and the environment, he may begin to identify a growing area of stability within himself, a clearer occupational self-concept. Schein (1978) terms this occupational self-concept a career anchor. The career anchor consists of three components, namely talents, needs and values, and is designed to highlight the gradual integration of these components in the person's total self-concept (Schein, 1978). Career anchors are therefore 'inside' the person and influence career choices and decisions (Schein, 1978). If an individual moves into a situation that does not meet his needs, compromises his values or does not utilise his abilities, he is likely to feel 'pulled back' into a more congruent environment hence the metaphor of an anchor (Schein, 1978). The career anchor can therefore be defined as those aspects of the individual's occupational self-concept that he would not give up if forced to make a choice (Schein, 1990).

The midcareer stage is actually the first realistic opportunity when the individual is able to assess his career anchor accurately. In fact, Schein (1978, p 43) lists the first specific task of the midcareer crisis stage (age 35-45) as "become aware of one's own career anchor - one's talents, motives and values". DeLong (1982a&b) reinforces the importance of discovering one's own career anchor at this stage by emphasizing that the problems of mid- and late career are much more likely to be severe if the individual does not have this knowledge. The midcareer stage is theoretically the pivotal point in an individual's life and career cycle, the point at which he has the tools to create a balance

¹ In this article the male pronoun is used inclusively. It can, however, be assumed that many of the early studies were conducted primarily on men, whereas more recent studies included women.

between his internal and external career. The demands of the external career, such as promotion, transfers, etc, and the development of the internal career, consolidation of needs, values and attitudes, coincide at this stage to provide the individual with the wherewithal to make the right career choice at the right time.

Schein (1990) has identified the following eight basic categories of career anchors:

Technical/Functional Competence

For some people the satisfaction of being an expert in a particular field is more important than anything else. If they moved into other fields of work they would probably experience less satisfaction. They feel drawn back to their specific area of competence. Their identity is built around the content of their work. They are therefore committed to being a specialist rather than climbing the organisational ladder.

General managerial competence

The managerial-anchored individual has an interest in general management. He differs from the technically competent anchored individual in that he places value on the skill of general management as an end in itself, as opposed to a technical individual who would regard it as a necessary, but unfulfilling part of the job. He is interested in making or co-ordinating major policy decisions, rather than focusing on specialist information.

Autonomy/Independence

An individual with this anchor avoids being subjected to people's norms. He values freedom to do things his own way above all. Self-reliance and independent judgement are hallmarks of his character. He finds organisational life intrusive and restricting and seeks out employment situations where he can be master of his own fate.

Security/Stability

The overriding need of an individual with a security anchor is the need to feel safe and secure within an organisation. It is for this reason that individuals with this anchor choose well-established and reliable organisations that offer long-term security.

Entrepreneurial creativity

This career anchor is characterised by an overriding need to create or exercise creativity. The individual with an entrepreneurial anchor will continually seek to establish new business, new organisations and/or develop new products and services. It is important to the entrepreneur that his new creations must be identified as his own personal efforts.

Sense of service, dedication to a cause

The service-anchored individual has an overriding need to express his values in the context of his work. The expression of values in the work context is of greater importance than utilising his talents. This type of individual has a great need to improve the world and assist people through the framework of his belief systems.

Pure challenge

An individual with this type of anchor values the challenge of his work above all else. He consistently searches for opportunities for self-tests in order to prove to himself that he can overcome impossible obstacles. His goal is to solve unsolvable problems and win against all odds. To him life and work are a competition in which winning means everything.

Lifestyle

This anchor may appear as a contradiction in terms. If an individual values lifestyle above all else, it is logical to assume that his career may not be of value to him. This is not necessarily true – more and more people are searching for meaningful careers that can accommodate other lifestyle factors. The overriding need of an individual with this type of anchor is flexibility. This type of individual will be most comfortable in an organisation that respects personal and family concerns.

Career psychology has become more complicated in contemporary times. The neat, orderly research designs predicting career choice, development, progress and outcomes do not always fit the increasingly complex working environment. Although these theories have made an important contribution to the understanding of the process of constructive career management, no one approach provides an adequate explanation of the individual's career in contemporary times. Research designs that can successfully predict career choice and development in today's times are therefore based on a matching process between the individual and his life's work. The contemporary career must be understood more in terms of people skills, flexibility and self-identity as career choice is influenced not only by job-related factors, but also by experience and activities outside the work arena (Hall & Mirvis, 1995a).

For the individual to make the correct career choices under these conditions, he needs to gain a deeper sense of identity. Self-insight is therefore of vital importance to the individual in guiding him to make the correct choices (Hall & Mirvis, 1995a). The process of career development is one of developing and implementing an occupational self-concept (Super, 1992).

The career anchor construct was selected as the basis of this research study because it is

- based on the individual's self-insight (Schein, 1990)
- a subjective concept (Schein, 1990)
- based on experience and systematic self-diagnosis (Schein, 1993a)
- broader in definition than the typical concept of a value or need (Schein, 1990).

Different career anchors fulfil specific career needs of the individual. The outcome of a compatibility or "fit" between career anchor and specific career or "occupational type" (as defined below) needs to be investigated. One purpose of this study is to determine whether midcareer employees with a fit between career anchors and occupational types experience a higher level of job satisfaction (extrinsic and intrinsic) than mid-career employees with no such fit. Occupational types are determined in terms of the individual's subjective perception of the needs, values and talents that his occupation fulfills, i.e. in terms of the eight categories of career anchors. If a link is established between the two constructs, i.e. individuals with a specific career anchor are likely to choose a matching occupational type, it is postulated that this person-environment fit will result in a higher level of general, intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction (Eastwood, 1980; Schein, 1990a; Schreuder, 1989). Extrinsic job satisfaction refers to satisfaction derived from contextual dimensions of the job such as remuneration and working conditions, while intrinsic job satisfaction, on the other hand, refers to satisfaction derived from the content of the job itself, such as the chance to do varied work and the opportunity to put one's own ideas into practice (Kaplan, 1990). In a study undertaken by Schreuder (1989), it was found that employees with security as the dominant career anchor, who perceive their work as congruent "with their career anchor", have a significantly higher quality of work life than those with no such fit. The limitations of this study, such as the composition of the sample, warrant further investigation into whether the satisfaction of career anchor needs results in specific outcomes such as job satisfaction. This should put the career anchor construct in further perspective as well as clarify its values in career decision-making.

The general aim of the study was: to examine the relation between career anchors and occupational types for midcareer managerial and non-managerial employees and to determine whether a fit between the two constructs would result in a higher level of general, intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction.

METHOD

Hypotheses

The specific research hypotheses are as follows:

- H1** There is a relation between career anchors and the occupational types of midcareer employees.
- H2** Midcareer employees with a fit between career anchor and occupational type experience a higher level of general job satisfaction than midcareer employees with no such fit.
- H3** Midcareer employees with a fit between career anchor and occupational type experience a higher level of intrinsic job satisfaction than those midcareer employees with no such fit.
- H4** Midcareer employees with a fit between career anchor and occupational type experience a higher level of extrinsic job satisfaction than midcareer employees with no such fit.

The Sample

The population for this study (295 in total) was midcareer managers, $n=164$ (senior and middle management), and midcareer non-managers, $n=131$ (clerical and secretarial). Employees were categorised as managerial or non-managerial on the basis of salary and job grade. Top managers and middle managers were categorised as managerial employees, whilst secretarial and administrative employees were categorised as non-managerial employees. A distinction was made between the two categories of employees to establish whether different levels of employees associated more closely with specific career anchors. In South Africa, Slabbert (1987) found that respondents in top management were closely associated with autonomy. The respondents in senior management were closely associated with security and service anchors. The middle managers were more closely associated with technical competence. Schreuder (1989) found that respondents in top/middle management as well as those in non-managerial positions were associated with security.

The sample was obtained from a population of 10 organisations. The rationale for approaching 10 organisations in different sectors was to obtain as diverse a response from as many organisations as possible, to obtain a sufficiently large sample to provide meaningful statistics. The rationale for studying midcareer individuals, i.e. individuals in the age group of 35 years to 45 years, was based on Schein's (1987) specific research findings on the stability of career anchors. According to Schein's theory, once individuals reach the midcareer age group, they will theoretically have matured and gained adequate insight to have clarified their career anchors to a point where they are stable and will probably not change during the remainder of their career.

Measuring Instruments

The following measuring instruments were used in this study:

Biographical questionnaire

A biographical questionnaire was designed to obtain information on gender, age, years of service, job changes and years that the individual would like to continue in his career. 177 respondents were male (60%) and 115 respondents were female (39%). A significant characteristic of the sample is that the respondents had a fairly stable work record. At least 70% of the sample had served in their present organisation for at least five years and at least 80% of the sample had made none, or only one or two job changes in the last ten years. Approximately 90% wanted to continue in their current career for more than a year. Only 10% wanted to continue for only a short period (up to a year) in their present careers.

Career Orientations Inventory (COI)

The career orientations inventory of Schein (1990) was used to measure each respondent's dominant career anchor. The inventory consists of a set of 40 items, all of which are considered to be of equal value and to which subjects respond in terms of how true the statement is (Schein, 1990). The scale used is a summated rating in the form of a six-point Likert-type scale.

Total scores obtained for each of the eight categories of career anchor were summed up and averaged to yield an individual score for each career anchor. The category that yielded the highest score was regarded as the individual's dominant career anchor.

The level of validity of the questionnaire was considered adequate for the study, as it was being used to predict broad trends rather than individual differences (Kaplan, 1990).

As no previous reliability studies were available for the 1990 version of the COI, the reliability of this questionnaire was tested. Table 1 reflects the reliability scores obtained for the 1990 version of the COI. These internal consistency reliabilities as measured by Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient scale are moderately high, with the exception of somewhat lower reliabilities for technical competence and lifestyle integration. A desirable reliability coefficient would usually fall in the range of 0,8 to 0,9 (Anastasi, 1976). However, in the case of individual testing, reliabilities as low as 0,3 are quite acceptable when instruments are used to gather group data.

Table 1
Reliability of COI, JPQ and MSQ, according to Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient

Factor	Total Items	Alpha coefficient		
		COI	JPQ	MSQ
Technical competence	5	0,59	0,55	-
Managerial competence	5	0,71	0,77	-
Autonomy	5	0,75	0,83	-
Security	5	0,78	0,85	-
Entrepreneurship	5	0,75	0,79	-
Service	5	0,73	0,84	-
Challenge	5	0,70	0,81	-
Lifestyle	5	0,64	0,81	-
General job satisfaction	-	-	-	0,90
Intrinsic job satisfaction	-	-	-	0,87
Extrinsic job satisfaction	-	-	-	0,80

Job Perception Questionnaire (JPQ)

The job perception questionnaire (JPQ) was adapted by the author from the Career Orientations Inventory (COI) to reflect the individual's perception of his occupation. The adaptation was designed to test the primary hypothesis of the study, i.e. whether there is a relation between career anchor and occupational type. The questionnaire measures the individual's subjective perception of his occupation in terms of the eight categories of career anchors. By measuring the sample group's perception of their occupation, it is expected that respondents give a description of their occupation that reflects the real characteristics of the occupation and relates to the characteristics of career anchors. For the purposes of this study, it is therefore viewed that occupational perception is a measurement of occupational type. Should an individual's perception of his job be congruent with the characteristics of his dominant anchor, a job fit is experienced. Like the COI, this questionnaire consists of 40 items.

A Cronbach alpha coefficient analysis was conducted to test the reliability of each of the factors of this questionnaire. The results are reflected in Table 1. A desirable reliability coefficient would usually fall in the range of 0,8 to 0,9 (Anastasi, 1976). The alpha coefficients for each factor in the JPQ are acceptable, with the reliability of the technical competence subscale (Cronbach's alpha = 0,55) being sufficiently reliable for group data.

It was therefore decided that the questionnaire could be regarded as sufficiently reliable for use in this study, bearing in mind that it is being used to predict broad general trends as opposed to individual differences. The results on the technical competence factor should, however, be conservatively interpreted.

Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire

The Minnesota satisfaction questionnaire was used in this study to provide an individualised picture of worker satisfaction. A measurement of general, intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction can be obtained from the questionnaire. The short form of the questionnaire consists of 20 items scored on a Likert-type scale. The questionnaire contains responses, which are weighted from very dissatisfied to very satisfied. A summation of all 20 items yields a general satisfaction score and the two subscales yield an intrinsic satisfaction score (the content of the job itself) and an extrinsic satisfaction score (the context of the job).

The results of the research of the Minnesota studies indicated that the MSQ measured satisfaction in accordance with expectations from the theory of work adjustment (Weiss, Dawis, England & Lofquist, 1967). Other evidence for the validity of the short-form MSQ is available from studies of occupational group differences (Weiss et al., 1967).

The questionnaire was designed for and tested on American samples. Kaplan (1990) assessed the short-form MSQ in the South African context. The reliability coefficients that he obtained were high (general job satisfaction was 0,90; intrinsic satisfaction was 0,82 and extrinsic satisfaction was 0,84). He concluded that the short-form MSQ questionnaire could be used on a South African sample with confidence in terms of its reliability and validity. The reliability of the MSQ was tested using Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient and the results are presented in Table 1. These reliability coefficients can be regarded as sufficiently high to regard the questionnaire as reliable for this South African sample.

RESULTS

Frequency distribution of career anchors and occupational type

For each respondent, a dominant career anchor and job perception were established. These measures were obtained respectively with the COI and JPQ. The sum of these dominant career anchors and perceptions was then computed for the total sample, the managerial group and the non-managerial group. The frequency distribution of career anchors follows.

In the total sample, 22,4% of the respondents (the largest single group) had technical competence as a dominant career anchor. The next largest group 18,0% had lifestyle integration as a dominant anchor. The rest of the sample was fairly evenly distributed among the remaining career anchors, with managerial as the least common career anchor. These results support current research findings (Schein, 1996), namely that technical competence and lifestyle integration are becoming increasingly prevalent as career anchors in the 1990s.

In the managerial sample, the largest number of respondents (26%) regarded technical competence as their dominant anchor. Respondents with lifestyle integration and challenge also composed large proportions of the managerial sample (20% and 16% respectively).

In the non-managerial group, 20% of the respondents (the largest single group) regarded security as their dominant anchor. The next largest groups had technical competence (18%) and lifestyle integration (16%) as their dominant anchor. These figures once again confirm previous research findings. Schreuder (1989) found a strong association between security and individuals in non-managerial positions.

The relation between career anchor and occupational type

To test hypothesis 1, namely that there is a relation between career anchors and the occupational types of midcareer employees, the career anchor and the occupational perception for each respondent were related.

For each career anchor, the respondent's occupational perception was recorded as 'fitting' or 'not fitting'. For example, in the

analysis of the relation of the technical competence anchor, 35 of the 62 respondents who were technically anchored perceived their occupation as technical. There was thus a percentage 'fit' of 56% for this anchor. The Chi squared analysis was used to assess whether the percentage fit for each anchor was significantly higher than chance, a chance fit was calculated as $1/8=0,125$ as respondents have an equal chance of working in 1 of 8 occupational types by chance. A significant fit would indicate significant predictability of occupational type from career anchors.

In the case of small sample sizes (expected frequencies lower than 5), the Fisher Exact test was computed. The Chi square or Fisher Exact test was computed for the total sample, managerial and non-managerial groups. The results are presented in Table 2.

Table 2
The relation between Career anchor and Occupational Type

Anchor/ Occ Per	Total Group		Managerial Group		Non-managerial Group	
	Chi square	Fisher Exact	Chi square	Fisher Exact	Chi square	Fisher Exact
Technical	109,41***	-	103,02***	-	-	*
Managerial	-	*	-	*	-	NS
Autonomy	-	*	-	NS	-	NS
Security	32,95***	-	-	NS	-	**
Entrepren	-	NS	-	NS	-	NS
Service	-	**	-	NS	-	*
Challenge	13,40*	-	-	NS	-	NS
Lifestyle	597,31***	-	-	NS	-	*

* p < 0,05 ** p < 0,01 *** p < 0,001

Overall, therefore, there is a significant relation between career anchor and occupational type for the total group. There is, however, only some evidence of a significant relation between career anchor and occupational type for the managerial and non-managerial groups when considered separately.

General job satisfaction of respondents with a fit between career anchor and occupational type and those with no such fit

In this study, the fit group and the non-fit group were first compared in terms of their general job satisfaction. This was to test hypothesis 2, which posited that respondents with a fit between career anchor and occupational type have a higher level of general job satisfaction than those that have no such fit. The hypothesis was separately investigated for the total sample as well as for the managerial and non-managerial groups. The results are presented in Table 3.

Table 3
The mean General Job Satisfaction scores of Fit and Non-Fit Groups

	Fit N	N-F N	Fit mean	N-F mean	Fit s	N-F s	T test DF	T Test
Total	137	158	3,65	3,46	0,56	0,62	293	2,88**
Man	76	88	3,70	3,56	0,48	0,57	162	1,80*
N-M	61	70	3,60	3,34	0,64	0,66	129	2,28*

Fit = Fit group N-F = Non-fit group

* p < 0,05 ** p < 0,01 *** p < 0,001

Fit mean = Mean of "Fit" Group

N-F mean = Mean of "non-fit Group"

Fit s = Standard Deviation of "Fit Group"

N-F s = Standard Deviation of Non-fit Group"

Man = Managerial Group

N-M = Non-Managerial Group

The mean general job satisfaction scores of the fit versus the non-fit groups are also graphically illustrated in the form of bar diagrams for the group as a whole as well as the managerial and non-managerial groups separately (Figure 1).

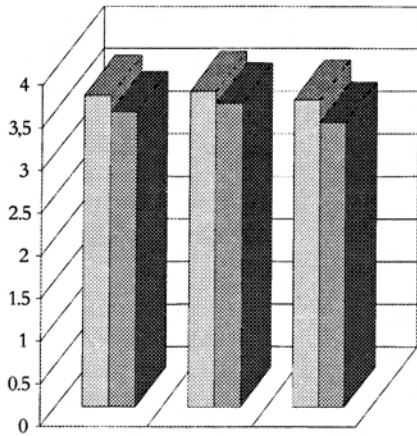


Figure 1: Mean general job satisfaction scores of total, managerial and non-managerial groups.

Total group Managerial group Non-managerial group
 ■ 'Fit' group ■ 'Non-fit' group

For the sample as a whole, the general job satisfaction of the fit group was significantly higher than the general job satisfaction of the non-fit group ($p < 0,01$). When considering the managerial group and non-managerial group separately, the general job satisfaction of the fit group was also significantly higher than the general job satisfaction of the non-fit group ($p < 0,05$).

It is clear from these results that hypothesis 2 was supported.

Intrinsic job satisfaction of respondents with a fit between career anchor and occupational type and those with no such fit
 The hypothesis that respondents with a fit between career anchor and occupational type have a significantly higher level of intrinsic job satisfaction than those with no such fit was investigated for the group as a whole as well as the managerial and non-managerial groups separately to test hypothesis 3. The results are presented in Table 4.

Table 4
 The mean Intrinsic Job Satisfaction scores of Fit and Non-fit Groups

	Fit N	N-F N	Fit Mean	N-F Mean	Fit s	N-F s	T test DF	T Test
Total	137	158	3,86	3,65	0,55	0,65	292,9	3,03**
Man	76	88	3,89	3,75	0,46	0,58	160,8	1,69
N-M	61	70	3,82	3,52	0,65	0,71	129	2,55*

Fit = Fit group N-F = Non-fit group
 * $p < 0,05$ ** $p < 0,01$ *** $p < 0,001$

The mean intrinsic job satisfaction scores of the fit versus the non-fit groups are graphically illustrated in the form of bar diagrams for the group as a whole as well as separately for the managerial and non-managerial groups (Figure 2).

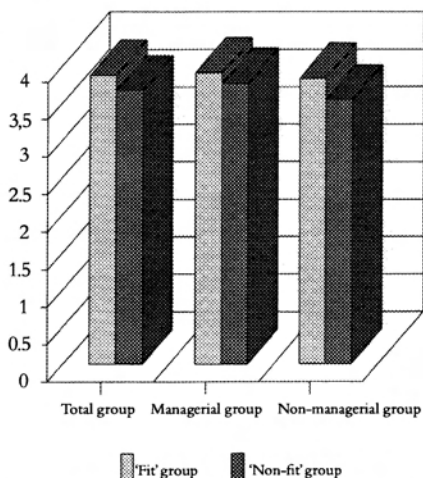


Figure 2: Mean intrinsic job satisfaction scores of total, managerial and non-managerial groups.

For the sample as a whole, the intrinsic job satisfaction of the fit group was significantly higher than that of the non-fit group ($p < 0,01$). For the managerial group, the intrinsic job satisfaction of the fit group was higher than that of the non-fit group. However, the difference was not significant ($p = 0,09$). For the non-managerial group, the intrinsic job satisfaction of the fit group was significantly higher than that of the non-fit group ($p < 0,05$).

Hypothesis 3 was therefore supported for the group as a whole as well as for the non-managerial group. Hypothesis 3 could not, however, be supported in the case of the managerial group.

Extrinsic job satisfaction of respondents with a fit between career anchor and occupational type and those with no such fit
 To test hypothesis 4, the differences in the level of extrinsic job satisfaction between the fit and non-fit group were also investigated. As in the previous cases, the investigation was carried out for the total sample as well as the managerial and non-managerial groups. The results are presented in Table 5.

Table 5
 The mean extrinsic job satisfaction scores of fit and non-fit groups

	Fit N	N-F N	Fit mean	N-F mean	Fit s	N-F s	T test DF	T Test
Total	137	158	3,21	3,10	0,81	0,79	293	1,90
Man	76	88	3,25	3,10	0,76	0,77	162	1,30
N-M	61	70	3,15	2,94	0,88	0,81	129	1,40

Fit = Fit group N-F = Non-fit group
 * $p < 0,05$ ** $p < 0,01$ *** $p < 0,001$

The mean extrinsic job satisfaction scores of the fit versus the non-fit groups are graphically illustrated in the form of bar diagrams for the total, managerial and non-managerial groups (Figure 3).

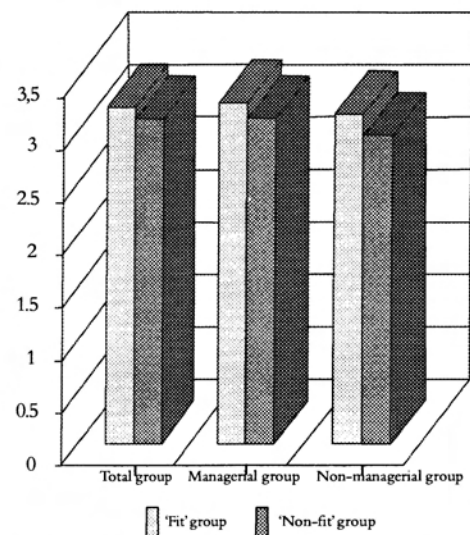


Figure 3: Mean extrinsic job satisfaction scores of total, managerial and non-managerial groups.

For the sample as a whole, the extrinsic job satisfaction of the fit group was higher than that of the non-fit group. However, this difference was not significant. For the managerial group and non-managerial group, the extrinsic job satisfaction of the fit group was also higher than that of the non-fit group, but not significantly so.

From these results it can be seen that a fit between career anchor and occupational type does not lead to a significantly higher level of extrinsic job satisfaction for either managerial or non-managerial employees. Hypothesis 4 could therefore not be supported.

DISCUSSION

The results obtained from the empirical study offer significant support for the trends indicated in the literature survey. The findings suggest that midcareer employees that have a fit between career anchor and occupational type are likely to experience a higher level of general and intrinsic job satisfaction than those with no such fit. The literature survey supports these findings, in that there is an extensive body of research providing consistent evidence of increased job satisfaction when person-environment congruence exists, in general (Gati, 1989; Holland, 1985; Pervin, 1987; Roe, 1957; Roe & Lunneborg, 1990; Spokane, 1987; Super, 1957, 1980, 1992) and more specifically in terms of a person-environment fit between career anchor and occupational type (Eastwood, 1980; Kaplan, 1990; Schein, 1990; Schreuder, 1989). However the empirical study did not provide support for the hypothesis that midcareer employees with a fit between career anchor and occupational type experience a higher level of extrinsic job satisfaction than those with no such fit. Once again, this finding is supported by trends in the literature survey which indicate that intrinsic job satisfaction can be predicted more accurately than extrinsic job satisfaction on the basis of career anchors (Kaplan, 1990).

Conclusions

The following specific conclusions emerged from the empirical investigation.

- There is a significant relation between career anchor and occupational type for midcareer employees (both managers and non-managers). The career anchor construct can therefore be regarded as a valid and reliable diagnostic tool for career choice once the employee has reached midcareer, i.e. once he has had sufficient working experience to have established his true talents, needs and values.
- Midcareer employees (managers and non-managers) with a fit between their career anchor and occupational type are likely to experience a higher level of general and intrinsic job satisfaction than midcareer employees with no such fit. The fit between career anchor and occupational type is likely to have less correlation with the individual's level of extrinsic job satisfaction.
- On a micro-level, there are no specific career anchor/occupational type fits associated with a higher level of job satisfaction than other 'fits'. The individual differences do, however, contribute to the overall difference in job satisfaction between fit and non-fit groups.
- Career anchors should be used in conjunction with psychological tests in order to increase the effectiveness of selection.
- The job satisfaction of workers can probably be increased by using the career anchor model.
- When negotiating the psychological contract, those career needs as identified by the career anchor model should be considered.

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