

A Study of Engagement, Protean Career Orientation and Turnover Intentions of Faculty Teaching In Professional and Technical Institutions

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INTRODUCTION

The current wave of globalization has changed the way in which organizations tend to operate.

There is a huge consensus that it has led to the development and an inter-connected business place; but a huge pressure of performance and competition has also been imposed on these organizations (Green et al., 2017). They have to adapt to the organizational changes as well as changes pertaining to economical, technological and social aspects (Sisodia et al., 2007). The upcoming employee base has to bridge between these changes and requirements. Thus, organizations are in need of the employees who are willing to go beyond not only in terms of hard work but also ready to engage in approach which depicts learning, speed, resiliency and adaptability. A better engaged workforce can be achieved through the development of such an environment wherein positive emotions (involvement and pride) are promoted leading to better performances and well being of employees. Therefore, employees who have protean orientation will be able to survive better. The Higher education sector of India is burgeoning with a

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significant increase in the number of institutions. The enrollment rates of students have also increased from 15% in 2009-10 to 24.5 % in 2016-17 (AISHE, 2018). There are 850 universities in India out of which 384 are State, 47 are Central, 296 are Private and 123 are Deemed (UGC, 2018). By their unique nature, universities are supposed to be the repository of the specialized and skilled intellectuals. They act as storehouses of knowledge in order to nurture the manpower needs of the nation. In the current scenario of Higher education institutions in India, faculty need to play a complex role. Universities across globe showcase a different picture of educational values, higher education system and the status of faculty so employed. The university setting or culture is entirely different. Universities in Western nations focus majorly on research and faculty development whereas Indian faculty is still striving to get an approximately similar stature. Much of the strategic practices enhancing engagement have been deployed by universities located in the USA and they implement the principles of protean career orientation indirectly in order to manage the intentions of faculty and hence, attain engagement. The traditional roles of the faculty have undergone a real transformation. They have to play multiple and much complex roles of a teacher, researcher, mentor and on non academic fronts too. The major reasons of the faculty to leave their organizations are related to less autonomy, fewer challenging tasks, low remuneration and poor hierarchical departmental structure. The young management and engineering graduates mostly look for corporate jobs paying hefty packages and not teaching because of less challenging tasks, promotional opportunities and self development opportunities. There is a dire need of studying the turnover intentions of faculty with respect to contemporary career concepts and the positive outcomes. The prime focus of the study was to establish the dimensionality of Faculty Engagement by exploring its factors, development of the scale and its validation; further, confirming the dimensions of Protean Career Orientation and Turnover Intentions scales. The assessment of the inter-relationships of these constructs, mediation effect by Turnover Intentions and effect of demographics on the Engagement, Protean Career Orientation and Turnover Intentions of regular full time faculty teaching Management and Computer Science Engineering courses in Government, Private and Deemed Universities in Delhi-NCR. No study has attempted to establish the relationship of these constructs in the context of Indian universities. This study will enhance the theoretical base of these constructs and provide an empirical foundation of the validation of the research instruments measuring Faculty Engagement, protean career orientation and turnover intentions. The study will be useful for regulatory bodies, apex institution managing the universities in India, administration, faculty and students.



RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

A radical transformation has been brought about by the globalization as to what organizations need to do differently to maintain their competitiveness. The higher authorities in academia and industry understand the fact that higher education contributes significantly towards the social and economic development of the respective countries. The present economies cannot be guided by just elementary

school pass outs (Shaw et al., 2012). There is a clear tangible evidence also, as the rate of enrollments have gone up, a diversified participation in higher education is clearly seen, new academic institutions are springing up and latest forms of instructional delivery are being adopted by these institutions. Investments in higher education have really gone higher in recent times and India has the largest systems of higher education in the world and fastest burgeoning systems in East-Asia. There is no dearth of business/industry oriented literature in the field of engagement, but very little academic research has been conducted in this field. Much of the research on employee engagement has been conducted in corporate settings and on corporate employees. There are very few studies which have been conducted in some other settings or sample like education and findings of such studies are least likely to be applicable in Indian academic settings (Pawar, 2014). The psychological involvement of an individual in one's work has been studied in detail but in case of higher education, extensive work is missing. This psychological engagement has been linked with the eagerness to achieve excellence, better performance and much reduced burnout in corporate employees (Nakamura & Csikszentmihalyi, 2005). There is an evident absence of any published model of faculty engagement with a special reference to university level faculty in Indian context. The changing context of the work environment of academic institutions has compelled the faculty to perform multiple roles and scenario has become much stringent for the faculty teaching management and computer science engineering programs in the light of recent events of shutting down of many engineering and business schools recently. Therefore, a study focused in this sample will shed light on their engagement quotient and their self development expectations which will further affect the students and university as a whole.



LITERATURE REVIEW

Kahn (1990) has been accredited as the founder of the concept of engagement and defined it as the deployment of an individual self to the work role and engaged people tend to express themselves in three ways i.e. cognitively, emotionally and physically while accomplishing their job roles. Kanste (2011) defines employee engagement as having a positive environment of well being in the workplace. Another definition is proposed by Shuck and Wollard (2010), who define it in terms of cognitive, emotional and behavioral state and positive organizational outcomes as its goal. Macey and Schneider (2008) argues that the concept of engagement can be perceived differently by different set of academicians and scholars. It may refer to a behavioral approach, psychological state and operational characteristic. Pritchard (2008) suggests that the concept of engagement can be defined in terms of: Say (extent to which employees portray their own organization); Stay (the level of loyalty of the employees towards their organization); and Strive (extent of employees' readiness go beyond their set parameters of performance to attain organizational success). Ramadevi (2009) opines that engagement depicts the degree to which an employee is willing to put discretionary efforts into his or her work role over and above required time. The definition of work engagement has been proposed by Schaufeli et al.(2002) who

measured engagement in terms of vigor (energy), dedication (degree of involvement) and absorption (engrossment with work). Maslach and Leiter (1997) further explain that “engagement” is characterized by energy, involvement and efficacy which are said to be at the opposite of the continuum of three burnout dimensions exhaustion, cynicism and lack of professional efficacy, respectively. There are many more definitions to this crucial and indispensable construct of present organizations. Saks (2006) defined engagement at two levels i.e. job and organizational engagement and conducted a study to evaluate the model of the antecedents and consequences of both types of engagement based on social exchange theory. Engagement has been studied since a long time, but the concept of faculty engagement is relatively new. Almost all major studies on this concept have been conducted in Western nations. India, being a land popular for education since ages, and which has many educational institutions rendering programmes of varied disciplines, has never covered any study of this kind. There are very limited studies available on faculty engagement (Barman and Ray, 2011; Livingston, 2011; Selmer *et al.* 2014). In Indian context, the number of such studies is really scanty. Very closely related studies were selected for the literature review. Livingston (2011, p. 11) defined faculty engagement as: Perpetual focused attention, enjoyment, and enthusiasm for the activities associated with faculty work through which the individual finds purpose, senses congruence with personal values and talents, is challenged to use knowledge and skills, and experiences productivity even during difficult times. The author surveyed over 500 faculty members teaching undergraduate and graduate students in ten US higher education institutions and proposed four dimensions of faculty engagement, that is teaching, research, service and fit to the organization. An engaged faculty will bring revolutionary transformations in the academic settings. There are many factors which affect the engagement level of faculty. The changing demographics of faculty teaching in technical institutions is one of the reasons. The psychological functioning of teachers has recently become a focus of particular attention. Turnover and early retirement rates are high in the teaching profession, and teachers' emotional and motivational experience may seriously impact their classroom performance (OECD, 2005). According to Sharma (2006), for providing quality education to students, Indian education system requires five main prerequisites which are: quality syllabus, quality faculty, quality research,

quality teaching and evaluation and quality character. Further, Gakhar (2006) explains that despite so much globalization around, teacher will remain the most important part of the education or instructional process, and there are three areas which define the Indian teacher's competence:

- a) professional skills and abilities;
- b) professional knowledge and understanding; and
- c) professional values and personal commitment.

Though many authors would agree that faculty's role need to be examined closely in light of teaching skills, research aptitude and their values, many believe that motivating faculty is also a challenge of the hour. Winter *et al.* (2000) found

that activities like task identity, autonomy, skill variety and job challenge are able to satisfy and motivate professors and act as drivers for engaging them in meaningful work activities. On the basis of the level of initiatives taken by faculty in their institutions, Hagner and Schneebeck (2000) classified faculty teaching in the US universities into different categories viz.:

- a) *The Entrepreneurs*: They take risk and will come up with something innovative to promote teaching and learning.
- b) *The Risk Aversives*: They will always hesitate to make themselves completely engaged in the process in learning, lack expertise and need significant support to make revolutionary transformations.
- c) *The Reward Seekers*: The motivation of such faculty is related to the reward structure offered by the university. When they come to know that by adopting new technologies and forms of learning there will be a great impact on promotion, tenure and salary, they are ready to transform.
- d) *The Reluctants*: They firmly believe that old traditional modes were far better than present day methods, and it becomes very tough to engage such faculty as they are psychologically discarded from the educational system.

The constantly changing work environment and the attitude of people towards the work have driven the necessity of developing a better understanding of the interaction that employees have with their workplaces (Weng & McElroy, 2012). The continuous and consistent advancements in technology, communication channels and pressure exerted by globalization have introduced changes in the work structure which suggests major work arrangements for many employees (Burke & Ng, 2006). The change in employee attitude in terms of their career development and self role towards this is desperately needed (Briscoe and Hall, 2006). In such a contemporary and transforming work environment, employees have to perform the central role by managing their careers. They need to be an integral part of activities related to the self management of the career so that relevant career options can be created allowing them to attain their career goals and prove employability (Sullivan and Arthur, 2006). The concept of 'protean career' was first introduced by Hall (1976) who defined it in the terms of 'self directed career' wherein the career is managed more by the employee than the organization and it is identified as the opposite of traditional career approach. A protean individual's career choices and his self fulfillment seeking become the integrative component in his life. Further, Briscoe and Hall (1999) opine that the career of an individual can be guided by one's value system and belief of identity; the adaptability and flexibility can build potential, provide direction and finally make it to success in the careers. The underlying principle of this approach entails that the psychological contract of an employee is with oneself rather than his/her organization (Hall & Moss, 1998). Employee turnover is extensively studied in view of organizations and the services of the organization. Since 1950, the researchers of management and organizational behavior have started to look into the field of turnover intentions. A large amount of research and literature is available on the causes and

consequences of employee turnover whether it is voluntary or not. It is expressed in various ways and looked as voluntary separation of individual from the institution (Price and Mueller, 1981). Combination of organizational events, working conditions and psychological factors results into interactions effecting employee attitudes towards the institution (Fang, 2001). Most common consent of employees leaving the organizations is because of dissatisfaction or better opportunities. Mitchell et al. (2001) suggested that although the dissatisfaction of employees with the employer or organization is a factor in employee turnover but it is not the sole factor of the turnover. Their work suggests that employees take into account other factors than dissatisfaction before leaving the work. These take both personal and organizational factors into consideration and are inter-dependent. The attitude is said to predict behavior and has been reviewed by many authors (Kelman, 1974; Ajzen and Fishbein, 1977; Calder and Ross, 1977). However, assessment of those situations where predictions about behavior can be made is a challenge for the researchers. The major contribution towards the development of the framework of 'Attitude Intention Behavior' model has been made by Fishbein and Ajzen (1975). They suggested that different definitions of 'attitude' indicate a different set of measurement procedures and hence giving different results. Therefore, no formal definition of attitude was proposed by them.



RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present research is an attempt to assess the perceptions of faculty teaching management and engineering courses in professional and technical Institutions in Delhi NCR towards their engagement, protean career and turnover intentions. To achieve this, a 3X2X3 factorial design was prepared wherein a list of 3 categories of universities viz. Government, Private and Deemed running Management and Engineering courses in Delhi-NCR was taken from the University Grants Commission's website and within each category, questionnaires were administered to faculty members at 3 levels: Professor, Associate Professor and Assistant Professor.

Research Objectives

1. To explore and confirm the dimensions of Engagement, Protean Career Orientation and Turnover Intentions of faculty teaching in Professional and Technical Institutions.
2. To study the relationship of engagement, protean career orientation and turnover intentions of faculty teaching in Professional and Technical Institutions.
3. To study the effect of demographic variables on Engagement, Protean Career Orientation and Turnover Intentions of faculty.
4. To check the mediating effect of Turnover Intentions in relationship of Protean Career Orientation and Faculty Engagement.
5. To suggest a framework for Engagement, Protean Career Orientation and Turnover Intentions of faculty.

Sampling Design

The study has been conducted in two phases. Study 1 refers to the selection of sample for forming analysis group and study 2 for the validation group. The universe of the present study is finite in nature and comprises of the Government, Private and Deemed universities having both Management and Computer Science Engineering departments in Delhi-NCR.

Study 1

The population of the study 1 comprises of the full time permanent faculty who are teaching management and computer science engineering courses in Government, Private and Deemed universities in Delhi-NCR. The selected 12 Government, 20 Private and 5 Deemed universities have 1536 full time regular faculty in total. The list of universities was drawn from the UGC's website and faculty details were captured from the website of each university and confirmed during data collection. Fishbowl technique was used to draw the names of the faculty in each category (Professor, Associate Professor and Assistant Professor) for each type of institution (Government, Private and Deemed). It is a probability sampling technique. The technique has been applied by Maseko, Mkhonta, Masuku, Dlamini and Fan (2016) in their work. The bowl containing chits having names of the faculty written on them was given to the expert and list of faculty to be communicated was generated. For study 1, 100 faculty each from the Government, Private and Deemed universities were selected for the study through fishbowl sampling and out of 300 filled, 209 valid questionnaires were selected for the study representing a response rate of 69.7%.

Study 2

The population of the study 2 comprises of the remaining full time permanent faculty who are teaching management and computer science engineering courses in Government, Private and Deemed universities in Delhi-NCR after study 1. The technique of Stratified proportionate random sampling without replacement was used in study 2. Randomization when done properly leads to the elimination of subjective influences of the researcher. Systematic randomization is a superior method to any other method suggested for the purpose. Randomization through MS Excel applying Bernoulli's function was performed to extract the list of faculty to be contacted for study 2 (Smith, Morrow and Ross, 2015). The randomization was performed to meet the minimum academic cadre of 1:2:6 (AICTE) in 12 Government, 20 Private and 5 Deemed universities. A list of 713 faculty was generated through randomization by MS-Excel keeping intact the academic cadre ratio of 1:2:6 as prescribed by AICTE. Out of 713 filled, 609 valid questionnaires were considered for the study indicating a response rate of 85%.

Questionnaire Designing & Data Collection

A structured questionnaire was developed and used to tap the perceptions of respondents regarding various variables. The questionnaire was divided in two parts. Part A captured the demographic details of the respondents whereas part B captured their responses on different variables of Faculty Engagement, Protean Career Orientation and Turnover Intentions.

The research instruments used to develop the questionnaire are:

Table 1: Details of Research Instruments

Construct	Type of Construct	Number of Items	Tool	Reliability
Faculty Engagemen	Dependent variable	35	Self constructed	0.89
Protean Career Orientation	Independent variable	8	Briscoe, Hall and DeMuth (2006)	0.83
Turnover Intentions	Independent variable	6	TIS-6 by Roodt (2004)	0.91

Data was collected through primary sources using a survey based questionnaire. The questionnaires were administered personally to the respondents in form of hard copies. Physical presence of the researcher helped in verifying the authenticity of the respondents. The objectives of the study were made clear to the respondents in order to avoid any ambiguity and they were assured of keeping their confidentiality intact to avoid common method bias. Any doubts or queries raised by the respondents were addressed personally on the spot. The data for study 1 was collected from November 2015 to April 2016 and for study 2, the time frame was from August 2016 to May 2017. The data was subjected to descriptive analysis, inferential analysis, correlational analysis, Confirmatory factor analysis and path analysis using AMOS 21.0.

Statistical Tools & Techniques Applied

- a) Step I: To ascertain the factor structure of Faculty Engagement, Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) technique was applied and to test the reliability of the scale, Cronbach Alpha Test was applied.
- b) Step II: Model fit, content, convergent and discriminant validity were tested using Confirmatory Factor analysis. Inter-relationships between the constructs were also analyzed by CFA.
- c) Step III: SEM was used to build the structural model and analyze the mediation effect of turnover intentions in the relationship of protean career orientation and Faculty Engagement.
- d) Step IV: Demographic differences were analyzed using the inferential statistics through independent sample T-Test and one-way ANOVA.

Hypotheses

- H1:** There exists a positive relationship between protean career orientation and engagement of faculty teaching in professional and technical institutions.
- H2:** There exists a negative relationship between protean career orientation and turnover intentions of faculty teaching in professional and technical institutions.
- H3:** There exists a negative relationship between turnover intentions and engagement of faculty teaching in professional

and technical institutions

H4: Turnover Intentions significantly mediates the relationship between Protean Career Orientation and Faculty Engagement.

H5: There exists a difference between male and female respondents in terms of their perception towards engagement.

H₀6: There exists no difference between male and female respondents in terms of their protean career orientation.

H7: There exists a difference between male and female respondents in terms of their turnover intentions.

H8: There exists a difference between married and unmarried respondents in terms of their perception towards engagement.

H₀9: There exists no difference between married and unmarried respondents in terms of their protean career orientation.

H10: There exists a difference between married and unmarried respondents in terms of their turnover intentions.

H11: There exists a difference between faculty of Management and Computer Science Engineering departments in terms of their engagement.

H₀12: There exists no difference between faculty of Management and Computer Science Engineering departments in terms of their protean career orientation.

H13: There exists a difference between faculty of Management and Computer Science Engineering departments in terms of their turnover intentions

H14: There exists a difference in Faculty Engagement of faculty teaching at Government, Private and Deemed universities.

H₀15: There exists no difference in Protean Career Orientation of faculty teaching at Government, Private and Deemed universities.

H16: There exists a difference in Turnover Intentions of faculty teaching at Government, Private and Deemed universities.

H17: There exists a difference in Faculty Engagement of faculty teaching at Assistant, Associate and Professor level in professional and technical institutions.

H₀18: There exists no difference in Protean Career Orientation of faculty teaching at Assistant, Associate and Professor level in professional and technical institutions.

H19: There exists a difference in Turnover Intentions of faculty teaching at Assistant, Associate and Professor level in professional and technical institutions.



INDINGS & CONCLUSION

First factor measurement model of Faculty Engagement confirmed the three factor structure of the construct with acceptable values of model fit statistics and reliabilities.

The three factors had moderate and significant correlations between them which showed that there is some higher order construct defining them. Thus, second order CFA was conducted and the factors converged towards the Faculty Engagement construct with the model fit statistics, reliability and convergent validity well in limits. Three items from Affective Involvement, one item from Intensity of Effort and two items from Technical Enhancement were deleted due to poor loadings, correlation measurement errors, and non-significant t-values. The Faculty Engagement questionnaire now contains 13 items under three factors. Thereafter, dimensionality of Protean Career Orientation and Turnover Intentions was also established using first order CFA with all model fit statistics, reliabilities and convergent validity well in range. Three items from Protean Career Orientation and One item from Turnover Intentions were deleted due to poor loadings, correlation measurement errors, and non-significant t-values. To assess the distinctiveness and inter-relationships of these three constructs, full measurement model comprising Faculty Engagement, Protean Career Orientation and Turnover Intentions was run and it was found that the three constructs have significant correlations. The final questionnaire with all the three constructs has 23 items wherein 13 corresponds to Faculty Engagement, 5 measures Protean Career Orientation and 5 reflects the Turnover Intentions of the faculty. Positive relationship was exhibited between Protean Career Orientation and Faculty Engagement whereas negative relationships were found between Protean Career Orientation and Turnover Intentions and Turnover Intentions and Faculty Engagement. The establishment of discriminant validity depicted that each construct i.e. Faculty Engagement, Protean Career Orientation and Turnover Intentions are distinct from each other and represent different constructs.

The assessment of the correlations between the constructs was ascertained by Confirmatory Factor Analysis and the model revealed a good fit, which gave an indication of proceeding to the structural model (Hair et al, 2010). The data was imputed to check the anomalies of missing data. The path coefficients of the correlational and dependence relationships were found to be significant further confirming the magnitude and direction of the correlations achieved through CFA. The structural model incorporated three constructs, namely, Faculty Engagement predicted by affective involvement, intensity of effort and technical enhancement; Protean career orientation reflects the attitude of faculty to pursue a career which they really want to do or are self directed towards it and Turnover intentions talks of the intentions of faculty of not staying with the institution. The curved arrow represents the inter-correlation between the two exogenous constructs i.e. Protean Career Orientation and Turnover Intentions and the straight arrows represent dependence relationship/structural relationships between a) Protean Career Orientation and Faculty Engagement and, b) Turnover Intentions and Faculty Engagement. This model suggests the framework of Faculty Engagement, Protean Career Orientation and Turnover Intentions.

The researchers first tested the model by taking both Protean Career Orientation and Turnover Intentions as independent variables. When Turnover Intentions and Protean Career

Orientation were taken as independent variables then, there was a moderate but significant correlation between them indicating a mediation effect. Thus, turnover intentions has been taken as a mediator (Byrne, 2010). Also, the theory proposed by Fredericks (1981) suggested that intentions mediate between attitude and behavior and protean career orientation has been referred to as attitude by many authors (Vos and Segers, 2013; Briscoe et al, 2006; Hall, 1976; Sahu, 2016), engagement is a behavior (Macey and Schneider, 2008; Kahn 1990) and Turnover Intentions are the intent to leave the organization (Tett and Meyer, 1993; Mobley, 1982). To examine the mediating effect, Hayes (2009, 2013) method was implemented who opined that two direct relationships can't result in an indirect relationship. The process entails the estimation of the total and direct effect of predictor on criterion, as well as the indirect effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable through mediator by generating a bias-corrected 95% bootstrap confidence interval for the indirect effect using 2000 bootstrap samples. Bootstrapping instead of Sobel test was applied to affirm the mediation effect owing to non-robustness of the Sobel test. All the steps suggested by Hayes (2009, 2013) were confirmed and it was found that turnover intentions partially mediates between the protean career orientation and Faculty Engagement. To analyze the differences between male and female respondents and married and unmarried respondents in terms of their perceptions towards engagement, protean career orientation and turnover intentions, Levene's t-test for equality of variances has been applied



IMPLICATIONS & SCOPE FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

A better engaged workforce can be achieved through the development of such an environment wherein positive emotions (involvement and pride) are promoted leading to better performances and well being of employees (Robinson, 2006). When employees are able to receive the positive emotions, they are more capable to think in a much open minded and flexible way, adapt better and avoid conflicts at workplace (West, 2007). The culture of the organizations reflects their ideologies and thus builds their reputation. A culture which promotes the development of its employees is a superior one and acts as a magnetic force. Faculty Engagement instrument has been developed which is a significant contribution towards the body of knowledge and it can be further replicated to other sample or extended to a larger sample. The study will help the regulatory bodies and people responsible for managing Higher Education to shift their focus from the turnover intention or retention to self directed attitude as it directly affects the engagement whereas turnover intention partially mediate. Institutions can benefit by hiring those faculty who have a self directed attitude as it leads to engagement because a self directed career attitude is a key component of career development of an individual (Sterns and Kaplan, 2003). Institutions can identify faculty with high self directed attitude and involve them in programmes like Faculty Development Program and Consultancy assignments wherein they can also contribute towards the revenue generation of the institution. The future researchers can explore various other relationship sets within the scope of this

study. Alternative causal paths or changes in the directions of the causal relationships may exist, given the cross sectional nature of the study (Giardini & Frese, 2006). Future research can determine the specific attitudes possessed by the faculty and the factors responsible for it. There have been many survey instruments to measure engagement at corporate level

like Gallup's 12 item questionnaire but they lack in advising the practices required to engage the employees, therefore, an 'actionable' survey must be developed for the corporate organizations too identifying the problem areas along with determining the engagement levels.

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