Employees’ graduateness and employability attributes in relation to their emotional intelligence and career anchors

**Contextualisation**

Employees regard professionally qualified and high-skilled workers as important intangible assets (human and social capital) to gain a competitive advantage in a turbulent business environment.

Employees’ graduateness implies that apart from their degree-specific knowledge and technical skills, they are able to demonstrate a set of generic transferable meta-skills and personal attributes which are generally regarded as indicators of their employability and work readiness. Employability attributes (as a subset of their graduateness) has been found to be significantly related to their graduateness.

In response to the more turbulent and uncertain career context, people seem to adopt a more proactive stance towards their careers by taking personal initiatives for their career development and focusing on their subjective experiences of career success, their career aspirations driven by their motives, values, and personal and career anchors. Emotional intelligence and career anchors have been related to people’s employability satisfaction and proactive career behaviours.

**Overview of the hypothesised interface between individuals’ career anchors and emotional intelligence and their graduateness skills and attributes, and employability attributes**

### Subjective career context

- **Career anchors**
  - Motives and values influencing preferences for work and work environments (internal career) guidance for future decisions and choices

- **Graduateness skills and attributes**
  - Personal and intellectual transferable skills cultivated at university education that distinguish the graduate from others in the field and indicate his/ her employability and work readiness

### Employability context

- **Emotional intelligence**
  - Expression, use, regulation and assessment of emotions in career decision-making and management

- **Employability attributes**
  - Personal meta-capacities in sustaining one’s employability

### Measures

- **Career orientations inventory (COI)**
  - 40-items, eight subscales, Cronbach’s Alpha coefficient for each subscale range from 0.77-0.81 (high)

- **Assessing Emotional Scale (AES)**
  - Schutte, Malouff & Bullar, 2007

- **Graduate Skills and Attributes Scale (GSAS)**
  - Coetzee, 2012

- **Graduate Skills and Attributes Scale (GSAS)**
  - Coetzee & Heidemann, 2010

- **Career anchors**
  - Cronbach’s Alpha coefficient for each subscale range between 0.75-0.92 (high)

- **Emotional intelligence**
  - Cronbach’s Alpha coefficient 4 subscales 0.79-0.82 (high)

#### Statistical Analyses

- **Reliability**
  - Cronbach’s Alpha coefficients

- **Validity**
  - Construct validity

- **Descriptive statistics**
  - Means

- **Inferential statistics**
  - Multiple regression analyses

### Correlations

- **Career anchors**
  - Significant and positive correlations

- **Employability attributes**
  - Significant and positive correlations

### Multiple regressions

- **Career anchors**
  - Pure challenge (COI)

- **Career self-management**
  - Adjusted R² = .43 (43%); F (p) = 5.80; p < .001

### Conclusions

- **Career anchors as predictors of employability attributes**
  - Employees’ career motives and values predict higher levels of the domain-related (problem-solving/decision making skills, and enterprising skills), and global moral citizenship (presenting and applying information skills), and life-long learning (goal-directed behaviour and continuous career orientation) graduateness skills and attributes.

- **Career anchors**
  - Self-perceived talents and abilities, organisational identification and an evolved sense of self-actualisation (gives one a clear idea of where one is heading and the relevance of one’s career decisions), Technical/functional; general management; autonomy; social and emotional intelligence; and values-based (sanctioned) to a cause; pure challenge; flexible

### General conclusion

- Employees’ career motives and values and emotional intelligence are important in cultivating the (graduateness) capacities and employability attributes required to sustain their employability in the contemporary world of work context.

### Limitations & Recommendations

- **Little Research in CA context**
  - Need new knowledge & valuable data

- **Practical contribution of findings**
  - Despite the growing awareness of the importance of career motives and values and emotional intelligence in career decision-making, there is a lack of evidence that adequately represents research on how individuals’ career motives and values and emotional intelligence relate to their employability attributes and graduateness skills and attributes. The findings contribute new, original and novel information to the available body of career psychology literature and may be used in the design and development of successful interventions concerned with optimising the employability of employees. Career counsellors may also find the results useful in facilitating proactive career behaviours in employees.

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