THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CAREER ANCHORS AND EMPLOYABILITY

by

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I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the following:

Declaration

I, Fezeka Ndzube, hereby acknowledge that this dissertation, entitled "**The relationship between career anchors and employability",** is my own work, and that all the sources that I have used and quoted have been indicated and acknowledged in the reference list.

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Summary

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DEPARTMENT: Industrial and Organisational Psychology

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In the post-industrial society, career management has become vitally important for assisting workers to be employable. This study aimed to investigate the relationship between career anchors and employability. The effort of researching these concepts is geared towards adding to the knowledge base in the field of Industrial and Organisational Psychology, so that the current organisation from which the sample was chosen and other organisations in South Africa can adopt a strong career management culture. A quantitative survey using primary data was conducted on a convenience sample (N=108) of full-time employees in a South African financial company. The Career Anchors Inventory (COI) and the Employability Attribute Scale (EAS) were used to gather data. The study found a statistically significant positive relationship between career anchors and employability. In addition, there were significant correlations between the sub-constructs of career anchors and employability, while significant differences in career anchor preferences and employability perceptions between males and females emerged. The only differences in career anchor preferences were detected between racial and age groups. The results indicate a mutual and positive relationship between career anchors and employability, which can be useful in career guidance in the 21st century.

Keywords: Careers, Career identity, Early-life career stage.

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CHAPTER 1
SCIENTIFIC ORIENTATION TO THE RESEARCH

This study is based on the relationship between career anchors and employability. Chapter 1 discusses the background and rationale for the choice of the research topic, the problem statement, the research questions, as well as the theoretical and empirical objectives. In addition, the chapter presents the theoretical paradigm that underpins the study, the research design and research method. The chapter concludes with an outline for the dissertation and a chapter layout.

1.1   BACKGROUND AND JUSTIFICATION

Since the rapid economic upheaval of the late 1990s and early 2000s, the world of work has seen a dramatic change in the perception of careers (Brown & Lent, 2005). Traditionally, careers were constant, life-long and characterised by high levels of job security and stability. Employees were concerned with gaining experience and moving up the corporate ladder in one company and in one field, regardless the number of years it took, and retiring in that company. A stable and good employee was even characterised by the tenure he/she spent in one workplace (Coetzee, 2006). However, with the quickening of the pace in the labour market due to global economic competitiveness, employers have become interested in employees with a competitive edge, a wide and diverse range of work experience, who are risk takers and flexible, in order to meet the demands of the 21st-century work environment (Coetzee, 2006; Kruss, 2004; Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011). It seems evident from observation that in today's world of work there is nothing wrong with changing employers and jobs in less than a year or two. Even unemployment is not a sign of incompetence or laziness, but can be seen as a time to reflect and re-plan the next career move (Coetzee, 2006). Organisational structures are becoming flatter and careers are becoming boundary-less. Instead of the organisation shaping a person's career, individuals are now responsible for managing their own careers. People are no longer limited to working in one field and one environment for life. There is a move towards starting up own businesses, consulting as a strategic partner with different organisations, and moving across various fields to gain experience or to improve quality of life and achieve work-life balance. In the same vein, organisations have shifted from providing rigid forms of employment to offering flexible forms of employment (Coetzee, 2006; Schreuder

& Coetzee, 2011). The workplace has become heterogeneous, thus diversity management is becoming a core competency in many organisations, especially in managerial positions. It is clear that educational qualifications and competence as a result of experience and hard work are no longer a promise of security in today's work environment (Brown & Lent, 2005).

This change in employment trends and the new understanding of employability have not completely eroded the traditional kinds of employment. There are still people who prefer studying and gaining experience in one field for life; complementarily, there are employers who are not interested in diversifying but are comfortable in providing a specialised niche service to their clients (Baruch, 2004). These kinds of employment exist mainly in technical professions or professional positions, for example medical doctors, psychologists, lawyers, etc. (Baruch, 2004; Kakabadse, Bank & Vinnicombe, 2005).

Given these changes in the labour market, investigating the relationship between the concepts of career anchors and employability have both theoretical and practical implications. Career mobility practices, for example, can be improved significantly.

Edgar Schein (1975, 1987) developed the theory of career anchors (Coetzee, 1996). He defined career anchors as the evolution of a self-concept of what a person is good at, and what one's needs and motives are in relation to work activities. A career anchor develops after at least 5-10 years of work experience and it is the guiding force behind career choices (Cerdin & Le Pargneuex, 2010; Coetzee, 1996; Van Vuuren & Fourie, 2000).

Whilst fixed abilities may have been useful for career success in the industrial era, the knowledge economy that has emerged is influenced by the ability to continually adapt one's knowledge and skills (Karaevli & Hall, 2006; Ottino, 2010; Schreuder & Coetzee, 2006). Domain specific occupational expertise is no longer sufficient to guarantee career success (Van der Heijden & Bakker, 2008). It has become imperative for employees to have a different set of occupational and career related competencies that increase and maintain their relevance in the labour market. This is necessary because employees always have to be prepared for the next opportunity; they are only able to do this if they assume full responsibility for the management of their careers (Ottino, 2010).

There is an abundance of definitions of employability in literature. Theoretically, employability can be defined as an individual's composite skills, which can include

academic qualifications, personality attributes, previous experiences and achievements, and career management skills that would render that individual employable in various areas (Butcher, 2008; Bridgestock, 2009; Kruss, 2004). Allvin (2004) defines employability as the link that enables individuals to assume greater responsibility for the management of their own careers. Phrased more simply, employability refers to the ability to create or find and maintain employment even in a jobless labour market.

Organisations can benefit from employees who are continuously developing in pursuit of increasing their employability, because such employees would be pro-active and always eager to learn, and thus would be likely to welcome challenges and take up on tasks of significant responsibility, which in turn would contribute to organisational effectiveness. It follows that organisations also have a role to play. They can assist employees by providing continuous learning opportunities and essential resources for employees to manage their own careers (Beukes, 2010; Park, 2009). Esteinne (1997) identified two characteristics of employability that organisations value (as cited in Beukes, 2010, p.3):

The first is that the organisational culture must not only create a climate of challenge for employees, but should also motivate and empower them towards achievement and provide them with a sense of belonging in an age when downsizing and restructuring are the norm.

The second characteristic would be that the organisation values and significantly rewards learning as a vehicle for change. Lifelong learning then becomes a life skill and one whose mastery enhances career progression and the organisation's effectiveness.

Research by Kruss (2004), Bridgestock, (2009) and Baruch (2004) shows that researchers are increasingly interested in unpacking and consuming literature on employability in order to assist Human Resource Management (HRM) with information on new employment trends for coping with the changes in the labour market. There has been limited research on the phenomenon of career anchors, especially in South Africa. Yet, it is fundamental that HRM and workers in general are aware of such information so that they can be better informed about career decisions they have made thus far and those that they are still to make in the future. Consequently, the objective of this study was to explore the relationship between these two concepts towards a deeper understanding of their nature and the impact they have on career decision making in the 21st-century workplace.

In the post-industrial society, career management has become vitally important in helping workers towards self-awareness, a clear self-concept and the ability to adapt in order to be employable. It follows that an understanding of Schein's theory of career anchors will be valuable in this regard (Bridgestock, 2009; Coetzee, 2006). The current investigation of these concepts is geared towards adding to the knowledge base in the field of Industrial and Organisational Psychology, so that the organisation from which the sample was chosen and other South African organisations can adopt a strong career management culture.

In this study, career anchors and employability were studied within the early life career phase as opposed to the school-work transition phase (graduate employability), which has been the focus of many researchers in the field such as Bridgestock, 2009; Afrassa, 2001; Butcher, 2008; Kruss, 2004 and Rothwell, Jewell & Hardie, 2009. The difference between these two life stages is that the school-work transition phase occurs when individuals begin to search for a job where they must demonstrate that their abilities, skills and knowledge are worthy of remuneration (Beukes, 2010). It is when young people leave school (i.e. higher education institutions) and begin to work in jobs that will shape their future careers. In the South African labour market, the opening up of the economy and greater integration into global markets is afflicted by severe shortages of skilled labour. In the South African economy, millions of unskilled people are unemployed. At the same time, there is a shortage of skilled people (ILO, 2003). There is an increasing acceptance that many students entering the labour market for the first time are ill equipped for the demands of the modern labour market and possess limited skills, while firms increasingly demand high-skilled workers (ILO, 2003). This has led to studies on graduate employability, which have sought to find ideas of how government policies could steer higher education institutions, private sector employers and government institutions to work together (Kruss, 2004). The concern in this career phase is getting employment and gaining work experience, which will in turn define a career anchor. It is therefore difficult to study career anchors in this phase as the main anchor would not yet be developed because of lack of experience (Schein, 1970). This is one of the reasons why the early-life career stage seems better for studying these two concepts together.

Individuals in the early-life career stage focus on achieving independence, establishing an identity, finding their place in adult society, and making a meaningful contribution. The

young adult is also concerned with establishing him or herself in family life and in a meaningful occupation (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011; Hook *et al.*, 2002). Researchers in the field of employability have paid limited attention to this career phase. However, due to evident changes in the South African labour market, where employers are switching to temporary staff and outsourcing job functions and are less likely to want to hire permanent staff in order to reduce labour costs, achieve greater flexibility and exert greater levels of control over labour; the need to study employability of those moving within the labour market has gained in importance (Schrueder & Coetzee, 2011). It is also assumed that workers at this career stage would have at least five to ten years of work experience, and thus the career anchor would be developed, For this reason, I chose to work with individuals in this career stage to study the concepts of career anchors and employability.

1.2   PROBLEM STATEMENT

Thirty-seven years ago, South African youth took to the streets in a fight against an unfair education system. Today, a substantial number of the nations' youth has never been employed or is suffering from long-term unemployment due to retrenchments and other kinds of restructuring in organisations (Statistical release P0211, 2013). A report published by Statistics South Africa states that unemployment in South Africa in the first quarter of 2013 (January-March 2013) is 25.2% and this percentage was derived from a sample of the working population including participants between the ages 15-64 living in South Africa permanently (Statistical release P0211, 2013). The unemployment rate has remained at a stable average 25.2% since the first quarter of 2012. In the third quarter of 2012 report, Statistics SA reported that 71% of the 25.2 % are persons between the ages 25-34. The report of the first quarter 2013 revealed that 33.5% of the unemployed in the ages between 25-34 are not in the education system or any kind of training.

Against this background, it is evident that there is a need for research in the area of career anchors and employability to determine how these constructs affect career decision making in the 21st-century world of work. Given all the changes in the current world of work, it is necessary to re-assess the relevance of career anchors as a theoretical and practical construct. There is also a need to understand how the theory of employability can aid individuals to remain employable in an era of high unemployment such as the one currently seen in South Africa. Organisations may also benefit in terms of understanding how to maximise their effectiveness at a time such as this.

Employability has been of interest to scholars in Human Resources Management and Industrial and Organisational Psychology since the beginning of the post-industrial society. This was a response to the development of a knowledge-based economy across the world. Researchers were interested in trends of employment that would suit the 21st-century workplace, which was becoming more and more flexible, unstable and insecure, in order to influence schools, the higher education system and employers in a manner that would encourage them to work together to feed and meet the demands of the 21-century labour market (Butcher, 2008; Kruss, 2004).

Research in this subject emerged in the early 2000s and is still of universal interest today as the labour market continues to change. The literature indicates that pupil employability must be taken into consideration by the education system, employers and the community at large as early as in high school (Butcher, 2008).

In summary, the review of literature on the subject of career anchors and employability highlighted the following problems that needed to be addressed:

Adding knowledge to the theory that is already available in the area of career anchors, especially with reference to the South African environment.

Whilst there are volumes of research in the area of employability, the focus has thus far been on graduate employability and the school-to-work transition phase. There is still a need for literature unpacking employability within the early-life career stage.

In the literature consulted, the researcher did not come across any study that investigated these two constructs together.

The nature of the theoretical and empirical relationship between career anchors and employability and the implications for Industrial and Organisational Psychology and career guidance practices are unknown, particularly in the South African context, and thus require further investigation.

This study therefore investigated the relationship between career anchors and employability and sought to bring about an understanding of the nature and implications of the relationship, if it existed, focusing on the early-life career phase in the South African context.

From the above discussion, the following research questions were formulated:

1.2.1 General research question

The general research question explored in this study is as follows:

Does a relationship exist between career anchors and employability?

1.2.2 Research questions relating to the literature review and the empirical study

The following questions were addressed in the literature review:

- *How are the constructs career anchors and employability conceptualised in the literature?*

- *Does a theoretical relationship exist between career anchors and employability?*

- *If a relationship does exist, how does it influence career decision making in the 21st century?*

In the empirical study, the following questions were addressed:

- *Does an empirical relationship exist between career anchors and employability as manifested within a sample of early adult workers in a South African organisation?*

- *Do individuals from different gender, age, and racial groups differ significantly with regard to their perception of career anchors and their level of employability, as manifested within a sample of early adult workers in a South African organisation?*

- *What recommendations can be provided for the practice of Industrial and Organisational Psychology and career guidance and where are the gaps where further research can be conducted in the subject?*

1.3 AIMS

The study aimed to achieve the following:

1.3.1 General aim of the research

The general aim of the research was to explore the relationship between career anchors and employability.

1.3.2 Specific aims of the research

The theoretical and empirical aims of the study were as follows:

1.3.2.1 Theoretical aims

The literature review aimed to conceptualise the following from a theoretical perspective:

- the concepts career anchors and employability.

- the relationship between career anchors and employability.

- the implications of the theoretical relationship between career anchors and employability for career decision making in the 21st-century workplace.

1.3.2.2 Empirical study aims

The empirical study sought to:

- investigate the empirical relationship between career anchors and employability as it manifests within early-life workers in a South Africa company.

- empirically determine whether individuals from different gender, age, and racial groups differ significantly relating to their perception of career anchors and their level of employability, as manifested within a sample of early adult workers in a South African organisation.

- provide recommendations for the practice of Industrial and Organisational Psychology and career guidance and to suggest further research strategies based on the findings of the research.

1.4   PARADIGMIC AND DISCIPLINARY CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

It is imperative that an empirical study is positioned within the correct paradigm and disciplinary context in order to facilitate the understanding and analysis of its results. According to Morgan (1980), a paradigm denotes an implicit or explicit view of reality. It uncovers the core assumptions that characterise a specific worldview. A paradigm exists within a discipline. A research project has to be embedded in a specific discipline in which a specific paradigm will be adopted to tackle the research question and uncover the reality of the problem (Mouton & Marais, 1996).
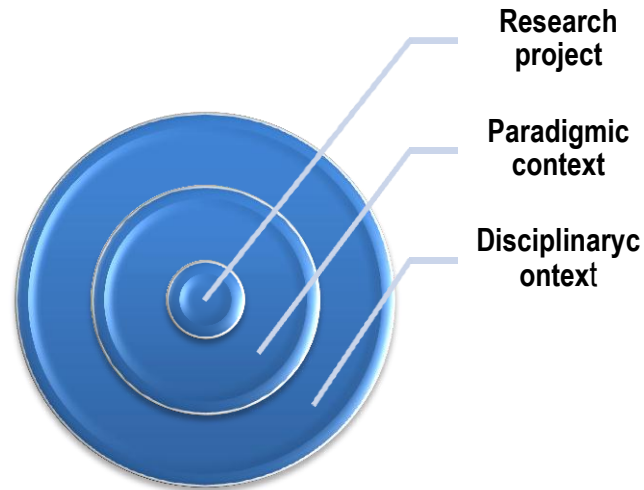
Figure 1.1 Representation of a research study (Mouton & Marais, 1996)

The following section outlines the disciplinary context of the study and the paradigms that were used to uncover the reality of the research topic.

1.4.1 Disciplinary context

This study is placed within the discipline of psychology, specifically the Industrial and Organisational Psychology branch. For the purposes of the literature study, the focus was on Career Psychology and Personnel Psychology and for the empirical study, the focus was on Psychometrics. These four branches of psychology are described below.

1.4.1.1 Industrial and Organisational Psychology

Kraiger (2004) defines Industrial and Organisational Psychology as an applied branch of psychology that is practised in the workplace (as cited in Beukes, 2010). It is concerned with people's attitudes, behaviours, cognitions and emotions at work. The main aim of this branch of psychology is to assist organisations in making better decisions about the entire process of employment and management of workers through scientific methods of collecting, analysing and use of data. Industrial psychologists act as an advisory body. They conduct research that leads to the transformation and implementation of new human resource technology or organisational strategy or an evaluation of the existing strategy (Beukes, 2010).

1.4.1.2 Career Psychology

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Career Psychology, also known as Vocational Psychology, is focused on providing models and explanations for career related activities which bring about an understanding that personality traits, aptitudes, interests, motives and values which are largely influenced by society, culture and economy result in vocational behaviour, decision making ability and vocational maturity (Beukes, 2010; Coetzee, 1996).

1.4.1.3 Personnel Psychology

Personnel Psychology is concerned with maximising productivity and employee satisfaction through the use of assessment and selection procedures, job evaluation, performance appraisal, ergonomics, and career planning methodologies (Beukes, 2010).

1.4.1.4 Psychometrics

Psychometrics refers to the development and use of various kinds of assessment instruments to measure, predict, interpret, and communicate distinguished characteristics of individuals for a variety of work-related purposes, such as hiring, promotion, placement; successful work performance and development, such as career planning, skills and competency building, rehabilitation, and employee counselling (Beukes, 2010).

1.4.2 Paradigm perspective of the research

The literature review focuses on career anchors followed by employability. The literature review on career anchors is presented from the views of the psychodynamic paradigm. Employability is examined from the humanistic-existential paradigm, while the empirical study is looked at from the perspective of positivist approach.

1.4.2.1 The psychodynamic paradigm

The assumptions of the psychodynamic paradigm include the following (Meyers *et al.*, 1988, as cited in Coetzee, 1996):

- a given psychological phenomenon is always determined by specific internal factors; and

- behaviour is therefore determined by forces within the individual of which they are largely unaware.

This paradigm is applicable to this study as phenomena such as career anchors develop in the psychological realm, not by an individual's conscious efforts and choice. There are certain internal personal traits that will influence a person's anchor (Amundson, Harris-Bowlsbey & Niles 2009; Schein, 1993).

1.4.2.2 The humanistic-existential paradigm

Humanistic-existential psychology is about understanding an individual's life experiences and the ways in which they construct meaning of their world. It is about placing a high value on the unique ways in which individuals develop their own view of situations (Cilliers, 2000; Garrison, 2001).

The basic assumptions of the humanistic perspective are as follows (Cosgrove, 2007; Friedman, 2008; Schneider, Bugental & Pierson, 2001; Schneider, 2011):

- Reality is socially created and socially sustained;

- People are responsible beings with the freedom of will to choose between various options;

- People are involved in a dynamic, ongoing growth process, in which they realise their potential to be truly themselves;

- People should be studied as an integrated whole;

- Individuals should be seen as dignified beings;

- The nature of human beings is positive; individuals participate actively in determining their own behaviour; and

- Human existence is intentional. This forms the basis of human identity.

This paradigm is relevant in the current study mainly due to the concept of employability. Employability is more an overt choice rather than developing in the unconscious. Individuals make choices in terms of how to develop their employability further by studying and up-skilling themselves even in tacit skills. They make informed decisions and choices regarding the things that will advance and those that will diminish their employability and, in turn, their careers.

1.4.2.3 Positivist research paradigm

The basic assumptions of the positivist research paradigm are as follows (Terre Blanche, Durrheim & Painter, 2006; Morgan, 1980):

- Ontologically, the assumption is that external reality is stable and unchanging. Reality is law-like.

- It adopts a detached epistemological stance towards that reality. The researcher must be objective and be an observer in the process.

- It employs a methodology that relies on control and manipulation, of which the aim is to provide an accurate description of the laws and mechanisms that operate in social life.

- It argues that knowledge and truth exist to the extent that they can be proved.

- It is concerned with understanding society in a way that generates useful empirical knowledge.

The positivist research paradigm was relevant to the current empirical study as human behaviour was studied in its context and measured by means of standardised psychometric instruments that provide an accurate and objective description of the facts.

1.4.3 Theoretical models

The literature review on career anchors and employability will be presented from the perspective of career psychology. In the case of career anchors, the theory of Schein (1978) will be presented. In addition, the models of employability formulated by Fugate (2004), Van der Heijde and Van der Heijden (2006) and Beukes (2009) will be described.

1.4.4 Conceptual descriptions

The conceptual definitions that are of relevance to this study are discussed below:

1.4.4.1 Career

Hall (1976) defines the term career as a process that encompasses the work experience, educational background, personal interests and behaviours that influence a person's decisions regarding work throughout their life. It has two aspects, namely the subjective career, consisting of the changes in interests, values, attitudes and sources of motivation as the individual matures; and the objective career, entailing the noticeable choices that a

person makes, i.e. changing jobs, deciding to study further or changing the field of study, etc. (Coetzee, 1996; Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011; Schreuder & Theron, 2001). Hall's definition is more of the contemporary career as it also takes into consideration the subjective side of careers. Traditional definitions of the term career only focused on the objective aspect of careers, which was all about the sequence and number of jobs an individual held in their lifetime (Coetzee; 2006).

1.4.4.2 Career anchors

Schein (1978) defines a career anchor as a set of perceptions pertaining to one's needs, motives, talents and skills in relation to work activities. An anchor is the guiding force behind career choices, in that once it is developed, it enables individuals to remain grounded in their career of choice and will pull them back if they took a career detour due to circumstances.

1.4.4.3. Employability

Employability is defined as composite skills that can include an individual's academic qualifications; personality attributes, previous experiences, achievements and career management skills, and would render that individual employable in various work areas. Employability enables individuals to be flexible and adapt to changes in the labour market (Butcher, 2008; Bridgestock, 2009; Coetzee, 2006; Kruss, 2004).

1.4.5 The central hypothesis

The central hypothesis for this study is:

There is a statistically significant and positive relationship between career anchors and employability.

1.5 RESEARCH DESIGN

A research design is a systematic plan or design of a given research project. It helps the researcher prepare in advance all the resources that will be needed to carry the project through. The main aim of planning a research project is so that maximum validity of the results is achieved (Mouton & Marais, 1996). This section defines the research process that was followed in this study.

This study was explorative in nature. The aim was to discover relations between two constructs and the extent of the relationship rather than determining cause and effect. Quantitative methods were used to explore the nature and strength of the relationship. Quantitative methodology in psychological research is scientific, in that it seeks to quantify and measure behaviour and draw inferences (Shaughnessy, Zechmeister, Zechmeister, 2000; Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2002). Quantitative research methodology has the following qualities (Creswell, 2009; Shaughnessy *et al.*, 2000):

- It is empirical and requires systematic controlled observation.

- To achieve such control in a situation, researchers determine the independent and dependent variables or select levels of individual differences and manipulate them to determine effect on behaviour.

- Measuring instruments have to be accurate and precise and should be valid and reliable.

- A hypothesis must be developed. A hypothesis is a tentative explanation for a phenomenon and it has to be clear and testable.

- Empirical evidence must be obtained to prove or refute the hypothesis.

It was the researcher's quest to meet all these requirements of quantitative research methods. Quantitative methods were chosen for this study because they are objective and they allow for broader generalisation of the results as the information gathered is interpreted and translated to statistics which enable the researcher to make scientifically valid generalisations about the phenomena studied (Mouton & Marais, 1996; Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2002). Survey methodology was chosen as being more suitable in studies of human behaviour (Babbie, 2011; Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2002).

Even though the study does not aim to explain causal relationships, the variables involved are career anchors and employability (Terre Blanche *et.al.,* 2006). For this particular study, it is not necessary to distinguish the independent variable, which is the variable which, when applied, produces a change in the other variable, the dependant variable (Terre Blanche *et.al.,* 2006). These variables were explored through a survey of the literature to clarify their meaning. The available literature on previous studies provided an understanding of the relationship between these variables.

According to Babbie and Mouton (2001), units of analysis refer to what object, phenomenon, entity, process or even event the researcher is interested in examining, describing and explaining. Individual human beings are regarded as the most typical units of analysis for social scientific research (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). For the purposes of this study, the unit of study is the group, in that the focus is not on the specific individuals who participated but on the trends of the group as a whole.

1.6 RESEARCH METHOD

The research method is divided into two phases that address the literature review and the empirical study respectively.

Phase 1: Literature review

Step 1: Literature review of career anchors. This involves the conceptualisation of the construct career anchors.

Step 2: Literature review of employability. This involves the conceptualisation of the construct employability.

Step 3: Conceptualisation of the theoretical relationship. Here the focus was on integrating the above literature to ascertain the theoretical relationship between career anchors and employability as manifested in a South African company.

Phase 2: Empirical study

Step 1: Determination and description of the sample

Practically, a single large organisation in the financial industry in Johannesburg, South Africa, was chosen from which to select the sample. The sample included employees between the ages of 25 and 45, regardless of their department, position and power; a diverse group was preferable. The reasoning behind this was Schein's (1957) assumption that career anchors take shape after 5 to 10 years of work experience. In terms of employability, the focus was on individuals who had done various things to increase their employability. It is therefore relevant to study adult careers, as it is typical of them to have well developed career preferences (Coetzee, 1996). The sample included 180 participants.

Step 2: Measuring instruments

The following instruments were used:

- A biographical questionnaire containing data regarding age, gender and ethnicity in addition to the quantitative instruments used to measure the variables.

- The Career Orientations Inventory (COI) questionnaire was used to measure career anchors (Schein, 1990). The COI is a valid and reliable tool, which has been used in research in the area of career anchors in the South African context (Tladinyane, 2006).

- The Employability Attribute Scale (EAS) developed in 2010 was used to measure employability (Bezuidenhout & Coetzee, 2010).

Step 3: Data collection

Participants from a specific company within the financial industry in Johannesburg, South Africa, were approached and requested for voluntary participation in the research. Respondents were required to complete a paper-and-pencil version of the two measuring instruments.

Step 4: Data analysis

The responses of the participants to each of the items in the two questionnaires were captured on an Excel spreadsheet. The data was then analysed statistically, using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS, 2008).

Step 5: Hypothesis

The research hypothesis was formulated in order to achieve the objectives of the study.

Step 6: Results

Data analysis and findings were reported through statistical tables and figures. Interpretations relevant to statistical analysis were utilised to make sense of the data.

Step 7: Conclusions

Conclusions emerging from the empirical study were drawn based on the questions that were presented.

Step 8: Limitations of the research

Limitations of the study were also highlighted.

Step 9: Recommendations

Recommendations were formulated with reference to the literature and the empirical objectives of the research.

1.7   CHAPTER LAYOUT

- Chapter 2: Literature review: discussion of theories of Career Anchors and Employability

- Chapter 3: Article

- Chapter 4: Conclusion, limitations, contributions and recommendations

1.8   CHAPTER SUMMARY

Chapter 1 has provided the scientific background to the study. The chapter has reviewed the background and rationale for the study, the problem statement, the aims of the study, paradigm perspectives, as well as the research design and methodology. In addition, the chapter has detailed the process that was followed in carrying out the research study as well as a chapter layout of the study. Chapter 2 focuses on unpacking the reviewed literature in terms of the constructs of the study, namely career anchors and employability.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW: CAREER ANCHORS AND EMPLOYABILITY

Chapter 2 focuses on defining and conceptualising the concepts of career anchors and employability. It first discusses the evolution of the meaning of work and careers, the latter being the key focus in this study. The aim is to provide a solid basis of knowledge that will enable a better understanding of the concepts of career anchors and employability. Through an integration of existing literature, different models and approaches pertaining to career anchors and employability are then presented, highlighting similarities and differences. A distinction is made as to which model best supports the study at hand. In addition, the chapter outlines the relationship between career anchors and employability. In conclusion, it discusses the implications thereof on career decision making.

2.1. META-THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS

The aim of this discussion on the meta-theoretical foundations is to establish a solid foundation that will aid better understanding of the concepts of career anchors and employability. The meaning of the concept of work and careers is traced from the ancient connotation to the contemporary context. Against the background of this discussion, it will be easier to comprehend why understanding one's career anchors and employability has become important in today's labour market.

2.1.1. The evolving meaning of work and careers

Work can be defined as an exchange of a service, time or energy for a monetary reward (Applebaum, 1992; Webster & Von Holdt, 2005). Work constitutes a significant part of human activity and existence. Primarily, work sustains life in that through work people can earn a salary that enables them to provide for the basic needs of survival. Work also sustains the quality of life. Work has been ranked highly in the hierarchy of importance in comparison to family, leisure and religion (Arnold, Cooper & Robertson, 1995; Arnold & Randal *et al.*, 2010; Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011). The soft meaning of work differs from person to person. To some, work is merely a means of making a living, of being occupied, utilising skills, and fulfilling needs; to others, it means contributing to a fulfilling life purpose (Arnold *et al.*, 1995; Arnold & Randal, 2010; Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011). Individual perceptions of work are influenced by societal perceptions.

The composition and meaning of work has evolved over the centuries. The next section focuses on what work meant in different eras.

2.1.1.1. The pre-industrial era

The meaning of work in the pre-industrial era evolved from three ideologies. Work was first seen as *drudgery,* hard work, and was associated with slavery; then as *instrumental to religious and spiritual ends* and *as intrinsically meaningful in its own right* (Applebaum, 1992; Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011). The European Renaissance introduced the idea that work was intrinsically meaningful in itself, that each person was their own master as work was seen as a means to creating and mastering nature (Applebaum, 1992; Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011). After the Renaissance, in the 19th century, a universal meaning of work emerged, which exalted work as the reason for all progress (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011).

2.1.1.2. The industrial era

The economy of the industrial era in the 19th and 20th centuries, otherwise known as the Fordist era, was characterised by manufacturing, mining, forestry, shipping and the like. The workplace was based on tangible goods that required manual labour around the clock (Arthur, Khapova & Wilderdroom, 2005; Danson, 2005). The workplaces of those days were mainly factories and warehouses where all this manual work was done. The most important criterion in employment was power more than intellect and competence.

Careers were constant in this economy and were life-long and characterised by high levels of job security. Employees were concerned with gaining experience and moving up the corporate ladder in one company and in one field regardless the number of years it took. For instance, a person would join the company as a picker/packer in a manufacturing assembly line and work their way up to supervisory level and managerial level. A stable and good employee was even characterised by the tenure he/she spent in one workplace (Coetzee, 2006). Organisations were rather rigid in their operations, thus they wanted to be sure even at the point of employment that the employees would be loyal to them for life.

2.1.1.3. The post-industrial era

In post-industrialism, the focus shifted to being on information rather than manual labour. The move towards a global economy in the mid-90s introduced competition in the workplace. Major restructuring in many regions dependent on traditional heavy and basic

capital goods industries led to massive redundancies, unemployment and a huge shift in understanding of careers (Danson, 2005). Due to global competition influenced largely by technological progress, it was necessary that organisations become innovative and make use of technology to work faster and more efficiently. Thus, there was a move from a manufacturing-based industry to a more technology-based industry. People who were normally at work around the clock were being replaced by technology. Flexible forms of employment were introduced (Arthur *et al.*, 2005; Danson, 2005).

2.1.1.4. The knowledge economy (21st-century workplace)

The form and meaning of work in the 21st-century workplace emphasises adapting to the fast moving labour market. Employers are interested in employees who have a competitive edge, who have a wide range of work experience, who are risk takers and flexible in order to meet the demands of the work environment of the 21st century (Kruss, 2004; Clarke & Patrickson, 2008). This new emergent economy is what is now called the knowledge economy. Powell and Snellman (2004) define the knowledge economy as follows:

> "production and services based on knowledge intensive activities that contribute to accelerated pace of technological and scientific advance as well as equally rapid obsolescence" (p.201).

In simple terms, this new age is about an economy where knowledge is the core commodity as opposed to the industrial era, where power was the most important commodity. Organisations are under pressure to be innovative in their stance and rapidly produce knowledge in order to be active players in the economy (Powell & Snellman, 2004; Arthur *et al.,* 2005). Formal education and continuous learning are important to keep abreast in this economy (Kruss, 2004).

Organisations in this knowledge economy have become self-designing (boundary-less) (Arthur *et al.*, 2005; Coetzee, 2006). Self-designing organisations are flexible organisations that are always ready and capable of adapting to change. They seek alternatives, innovative ways of doing things, make use of cutting-edge technology and are always evaluating the status quo. Individuals who make it in this environment are those who are also flexible and highly employable due to educational background, accumulated knowledge and tacit skills. These are individuals who drive their own careers, who do not wait for the organisation to draw up a development strategy for them. They see

opportunities for work that needs to be done and they use them; they create work for themselves. These individuals have boundary-less careers (Arthur *et al.*, 2005; Coetzee, 2006). Herdberg *et al.* (1976) believe that it is desirable for organisations and employees to be self-designing in this fast-paced environment (as cited in Arthur *et al.,* 2005).

Evidently, work has evolved tremendously from the pre-industrial era to the 21st-century workplace. Even though some groups in the pre-industrial era did not see work as very important, some still placed a certain value on work and its importance grew and grew as civilisation progressed. This has had a significant impact on the make-up of careers and given rise to the field of Career Psychology, because it is important for both the individual and for organisations to understand emerging career trends.

It is important to note that in the knowledge economy career success has shifted from the objective definition. People now define their success by their levels of satisfaction, their job fit, and how much they have grown in knowledge in their jobs. Less traditional career patterns are taking over. Career mobility is no longer necessarily upward movement but is now also vertical movement as long as the careerist feels challenged by the work and job satisfaction is at acceptable levels. Career development can no longer be effectively explained by stages and age is no longer an indication of where one should be in one's career (Coetzee, 2006; Brown & Lent, 2005). Career Psychology is now interested in understanding the subjective career, internally driven career behaviours that promote career mobility, career embeddedness, and career agency of individuals. It is thus of interest to seek deeper understanding of the concepts of career anchors and employability as part of internally driven careers.

2.2. CONCEPTUALISATION

2.2.1. Career anchors

2.2.1.1. Definition of career anchors

The concept of career anchors originated from a longitudinal study done by Edgar Schein in the 1960s-70s (Schein, 1993). His aim was to discover what it was that made people commit to certain careers and organisations. He followed up his longitudinal study by research he committed to in later years to develop this concept further. Schein (1996) makes a distinction between the internal and external career. He defines the internal

career as involving a subjective sense of knowing where one is going with one's career as opposed to the external career, which involves the formal stages and roles defined by organisational policies and societal concepts of what one can expect in the world of work. Schein (1996) proposes that a career anchor is at the core of the internal career: the career anchor holds together the internal career in the midst of uncertainty and dramatic changes in the external career. The theory rests on the assumption that as individuals acquire further job experience they learn more about themselves. They discover their strengths, weaknesses, and needs as well as their orientation in relation to the work they do. This process of learning about themselves in the work context leads to the development of a career anchor (Coetzee, 1996; Kakabadse *et al.*, 2005; Schein, 1993; Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011). A career anchor acts as an engine room of one's career. Oftentimes due to life circumstances one may be derailed and take a job that is not congruent with one's interests and needs; in such cases, the career anchor will pull one back to a more suitable job (Kakabadse *et al.*, 2005; Schein, 1993; Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011).

Another definition of a career anchor is that it is an evolving self concept of what one sees oneself as being good at, what one's needs and motives are, and what values govern one's career choices (Schein, 1993; Van Vuuren & Fourie, 2000). Schein (1978, 1993, and 1996) distinguishes three components of the self-concept that together constitute a career anchor, namely:

- Self perceived talents and abilities;

- Self perceived needs and motives; and

- Self perceived attitudes and values.

The following are the main distinguishing features of career anchors (Schein, 1993; Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011):

- Career anchors help one define one's skill and one's worth;

- They develop in the early stages of one's career (5-10 years of experience) as one begins to realise the aspects of work one enjoys the most;

- They help to guide choices about changing jobs; and

- They constitute a source of stability across one's work life.

2.2.1.2.   Basic assumptions of Schein's career anchor theory

At a theoretical level, Schein's work has made major contributions to how career scholars conceptualise the development of a stable career identity. His theory rests on the following points, in particular about the formation of stable career identities (Feldman & Bolino, 1996; Schein, 1990):

- Schein's work highlights the important distinctions between the initial career choice and subsequent career identity formation. He asserts that a stable career identity is formed through the integration of an individual's interests with his/her abilities and values. Furthermore, he posits that a stable career identity emerges through concrete experiences with real tasks and real co-workers in a real work organisation, as opposed to emerging through likes and dislikes developed at school (e.g. liking maths and science at school leading to a career in engineering).

- Schein's work also highlights the variety of possible career paths within a career based on the individual's dominant career anchor. For example, an individual entering the field of marketing could pursue a technical career track in marketing research, a managerial track in brand management, an entrepreneurial track in new product development, an autonomy career track as a marketing consultant, or a security track as a marketing professor.

- The differences in career tracks of individuals within the same occupation may be as great as the differences in career tracks amongst individuals in different occupations, e.g., career experiences of a professor in marketing may be similar to those of a professor in engineering, as opposed to being similar to those of a marketing manager.

- Schein's work on career anchors suggests that these constellations of interests, abilities and values stabilise individuals' career choice in predictable ways. Schein further explains that the idea of an anchor does not imply absolute rigidity and zero change; instead, it implies some movement; not random movement, but movement within a circumscribed area.

2.2.2. Employability

2.2.2.1. Definition of employability

Traditional definitions of employability were centred on skills that are acquired via higher education and training received at a higher learning institution. Employability was measured by the extent to which graduates (new or old) got full-time employment (Bridgestock, 2009). Thus, employability was viewed only from the perspective of new entrants into the labour market, and specifically those individuals who had higher education qualifications (Bridgestock, 2009). However, the tone in defining employability changed with the change in the labour market, where traditional linear careers through one organisation are less common and where competence is not only about a higher education qualification but also about skills acquired though experience and softer qualities such as leadership, communication, and teamwork (Bridgestock, 2009).

Researchers started considering those individuals who were already in the labour market but wanted to make a change, thus definitions changed to include initial entry, maintenance of employment and moving within the labour market (McQuaid & Lindsay, 2005). The definitions that emerged are as follows:

- Hillage and Pollard (2008) suggest that employability is the capacity of an individual to gain initial employment, to maintain employment and to move self-sufficiently within the labour market (as cited in McQuaid & Lindsay, 2005).

- Similarly, De Cuyper, Bernhard-Oettel, Berntson, De Witte and Alarco (2008) define employability as the individual's ability to enter the world of work and to make labour market transitions. This ability results from the individual's skills gained through higher education, skill gained in the workplace, knowledge of the labour market and adaptability.

- The North American and European HRD (1980) argues that successful career development (employability) requires the development of skills that are transferable and the flexibility to move between jobs (McQuaid & Lindsay, 2005).

Subjective indicators of employability were also developed in previous studies of employability (De Cuyper *et al.*, 2008). Berntson (2006 & 2007) and colleagues defined

employability as the individual's perceptions of available alternatives in the labour market and the personal ability to access those possibilities (as cited in De Cuyper *et al.*, 2008).

Gazier (1998) suggests that earlier versions of the concept of employability were rather static and one-sided (as cited in McQuaid & Lindsay, 2005). They all focused on placing the responsibility on the individual and they made no mention of the labour market conditions that would also play a role. Individuals can only enter or move within the labour market if opportunities are available. Other attempts to define employability have taken a more holistic approach, considering both the role of the individual and that of the labour market conditions (supply and demand factors) (McQuaid & Lindsay, 2005). The Canadian Labour Force Development Board (1994) defines employability as the capacity of an individual to gain meaningful employment, given the interaction between personal circumstances and labour market conditions. Clarke (2008) agrees with this perspective and argues that having the right qualifications, skills, competence, attitudes and behaviours will not guarantee a job in a jobless labour market.

2.2.2.2. Factors influencing employability

Research has established that employability is a multidimensional concept in that there are various factors that contribute to a person's employability (Clarke, 2008; Fugate, Kinicki & Ashforth, 2004). An integrated discussion of these factors influencing employability follows below.

a Skills and abilities

According to Dench (2007), employers seek employees who can demonstrate three kinds of skills, namely: personal attributes, personal skill, and technical skills (as cited in Clarke, 2008). The Australian Education Council (1992) identified seven key skills and abilities that employers look for in potential employees, whether directly from university or making a transition within the job market. These include collecting, analysing and organising ideas, working with people, problem solving, planning and organising, and the use of technology. Dench (2007) adds communication and decision making to this list and these make up *personal skills* (Clarke, 2008). *Personal attributes* include honesty, reliability, and integrity, while *technical skills* are those skills gained through work experience and formal education. Educators, employers and governments regard these skills as critical because

they enable lifelong learning and are necessary for success in the contemporary workplace (Clarke, 2008; Fugate *et al.*, 2004).

b Attitudes and behaviours

Fugate *et al.* (2004) suggest that even with the right combination of skills and abilities an individual may still experience difficulty finding or maintaining suitable employment. Coupled with skills and abilities there are attitudes and behaviours which enhance employability, and these include flexibility and adaptability. Flexibility is likely to promote an adaptable behaviour to situations. Flexibility and adaptability are evident in behaviours such as career self-management. Meister (1998) defines career self-management as the ability to adapt to the changing labour market and being able to anticipate and prepare for the future (as cited in Clarke, 2008). Career self-management includes behaviours such as self-evaluation of strengths and weaknesses, monitoring internal and external labour markets, updating of skills to meet the demand of the labour market, and networking and career planning (Clarke, 2008).

c Individual characteristics

While career literature tends to focus on individual characteristics such as self-efficacy, risk taking and self esteem as personality factors that influence employability (Fugate *et al.*, 2004), individual characteristics may also include variables such as age, gender, ethnicity, marital status, family responsibilities and health and wellness (Clarke, 2008). These may significantly affect an individual's ability to obtain and maintain employment, especially variables that are outside of the individual's control. For instance, regardless of how much skill one possesses or how adaptable one is, one cannot change one's age or gender. Unfortunately, prejudice based on age and gender is still evident. The stereotype that older employees are resistant to change, less willing to learn and even challenged in terms of health and well-being may negatively affect their employability (Clarke, 2008). Furthermore, women may be less willing to accept jobs that will affect their family responsibilities such as child-care issues, and thus are often seen as being less committed to organisational goals and more committed to personal goals; this in turn may mean denial of opportunities that would support career development and employability (Clarke, 2008).

d   Labour market

Employability studies have placed significant focus on individual characteristics (supply) while neglecting to consider the labour market (demand). Having the right qualifications, skills, and attitudes may enhance employability, yet these may still not be sufficient in a jobless labour market. Brown *et al.* (2003) defines employability as both relative and absolute, in that a combination of the right skills, experience, and personal attributes may enhance absolute employability, yet may not determine relative employment (does not guarantee a job) (Clarke, 2008).

2.2.3. Early-life career stage

2.2.3.1. Definition of early-life career stage

The early-life career stage includes individuals between the ages of 25 and 45 (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011). Energy and physical vigour are at their peak. Cognitive development and functioning are also optimal, characterised by good memory, abstract thinking ability, problem solving ability and learning new skills (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011; Hook, Watts & Cockroft, 2002). The main life task of individuals in this stage includes achieving independence, establishing an identity, and finding their place as an adult in society and making a meaningful contribution. The young adult is also concerned with establishing him or herself in family life and in a meaningful occupation (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011; Hook *et al.*, 2002).

2.2.3.2. Phases of the early-life career stage

There are three phases of the early-life career stage, namely the novice, transitional and settling down phases (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011).

a   Novice phase

This phase includes individuals between ages 17 and 30. The individual here is new in the adult world and is establishing new relationships in their career, family relationships, love relationships, and so on. The primary task here is that of establishing oneself in these new relationships in the adult world. This phase involves two tasks, namely *exploring the adult world* and *creating a stable adult life structure* (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011). In the exploration phase, options are kept open. It is not a time to commit but to try different things in order to be able to make informed choices in various aspects of one's life, be it in

careers, marriage, choice of a place to live, etc. This phase is characterised by adventure and a world full of possibilities and colour. The phase *creating a stable life structure,* on the other hand, is the time where the young adult makes more serious decisions that would serve as a basis for their adult life. Decisions such as to settle down in marriage, in a specific career, in a specific city are made. It is important that a balance be found between these two phases. Failure to do so may cause confusion in later stages of one's life. If structure is sought without sufficient exploration, premature decisions could be made, yet if the exploration phase carries on much longer than it should, delays in settling down and stability in one's life could be experienced (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011).

b Transitional phase

The transitional phase comes into play between the ages of 30 and 35. This phase is also known *as the age thirty transition*. In this phase, the young adult may start experiencing life as being serious. Evaluation of decisions made in the previous phase may occur. A need to change some things for the better may arise. Thus individuals in this stage will change careers before it is too late, if need be. Some will further their education in the chosen career or choose a different route altogether. This process of evaluation is referred to as the quarter life quandary (Jewell, 2003, as cited in Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011).

c Settling down phase

The age thirty transition is followed by the settling down phase. In this phase, the individual is concerned with reaching the goals and life targets that were set earlier, as the self has now become more engaged in the world. Advancement at this stage is very important, thus high performance, promotion and recognition in the workplace become a measure of advancement and may foster psychological success. Challenges in this phase may include balancing career and family life (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011).

In summary, the early career stage is a period of career establishment and stabilisation. The role that organisations can play in this phase is to assist the employee in fitting in, by providing sufficient resources such as training and on the job coaching and opportunities that promote a vocational self-awareness. The individual, on the other hand, must also be willing to learn and develop in order not to become obsolete (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011). Studying career anchors and employability within this career stage will be beneficial to the participants, as vocational awareness will be enhanced.

2.2.4. Career identity

2.2.4.1. Definition of career identity

Career identity can be defined as a network of meanings in which the individual consciously links his own motivation, interest and competencies which are acceptable career roles. At the centre of career identity is the question "who am I in the world of work?", thus one's career identity may include hopes, goals, and fears; values, beliefs, norms and personality traits, how all these interact, and the time phase (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011; Fugate *et al.,* 2004). Career identity is the interplay between role identity, occupational identity and organisational identity, given that individuals will define themselves in line with such constructs.

The creation of a career identity provides a coherent representation of often diverse and scattered career experiences and aspirations, thus it assists individuals in making meaning of their careers that have unfolded over time (Fugate *et al.,* 2004). Career identities also provide direction to the individual, in that individuals with a clear identity know where they are from and where they are going, and are likely to avoid making time wasting detours. Such individuals are normally highly employable, as a career identity will also boost one's self-confidence (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011; Fugate *et al.,* 2004).

2.2.5. Career success

2.2.5.1. Definition of career success

From the definition, it is clear that the term career is twofold: the objective and subjective career. Career success thus also manifests itself in those two realms. Objective career success can be seen by the observable career forward movement, i.e. pay raise, promotion, added responsibility, level of decision-making, etc. Subjective career success is measured by intrinsic factors such as emotions, attitudes towards the job and organisation, which may be seen in the incumbent's job satisfaction, organisational satisfaction and relations with colleagues in general (Feldman & Ng, 2007).

2.3. THEORETICAL MODELS: CAREER ANCHORS AND EMPLOYABILITY

2.3.1. Models of career anchors

This section discusses three models of career anchors. These are Schein's (1990) *Career Anchor Model*, *The Octagonal Model* by Feldman and Bolino (1996) and lastly the *Circular Value Structure Model* by Schwartz (1992). An integration of the three models, highlighting similarities and differences, is outlined and the model that best suits the current study is identified.

2.3.1.1. Schein's career anchor model

Schein (1978) initially identified five categories of career anchors based on basic values, motives and needs. These are Autonomy/Independence; Security/Stability; Technical-Functional Competence; General Managerial Competence; and Entrepreneurial Creativity. A wider range of occupations emerged in the 1980s and Schein's follow-up studies identified three more career anchor categories, namely Service or Dedication to a Cause; Pure Challenge; and Lifestyle (Schein, 1996). Figure 2.1 shows how the career anchors are categorised into the three groups.
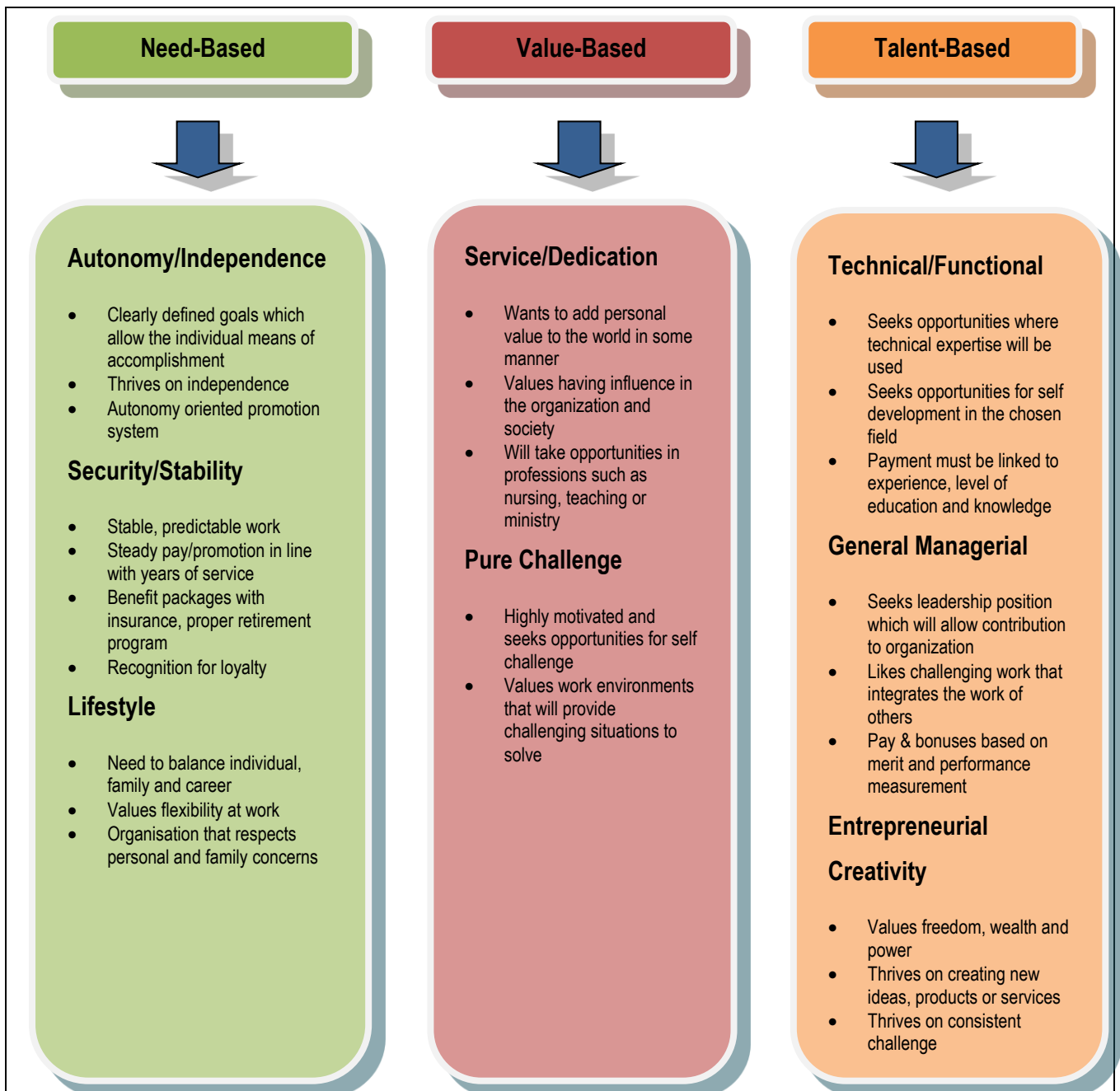
Figure 2.1: Career anchors (Schein, 1978)

Schein's model centres on the attribute of congruence. He argues that when individuals achieve congruence between their career anchors and work environment, they are most likely to achieve positive career outcomes (Feldman & Bolino, 1996). Schein (1987, 1990) proposes that career outcomes include work effectiveness, specific job satisfactions (namely satisfaction with the type of work, pay and benefits promotion system and advancement opportunities), and job stability (Feldman & Bolino, 1996). Schein's model assumes that each individual has only one true career anchor. He argues that if no clear

anchor emerges, it is because the individual has not had enough life experiences to develop priorities (Feldman & Bolino, 1996; Schein, 1990).

Congruence of career outcomes with work environment

- Technical/Functional competence
- Managerial competence
- Security and stability
- Autonomy & independence
- Service & dedication
- Pure challenge
- Lifestyle

Career outcomes

- Work effectiveness
- Satisfaction with:
  - Work itself
  - Pay & benefits
  - Type of recognition
- Job stability

Moderator Variable

Availability of alternative jobs
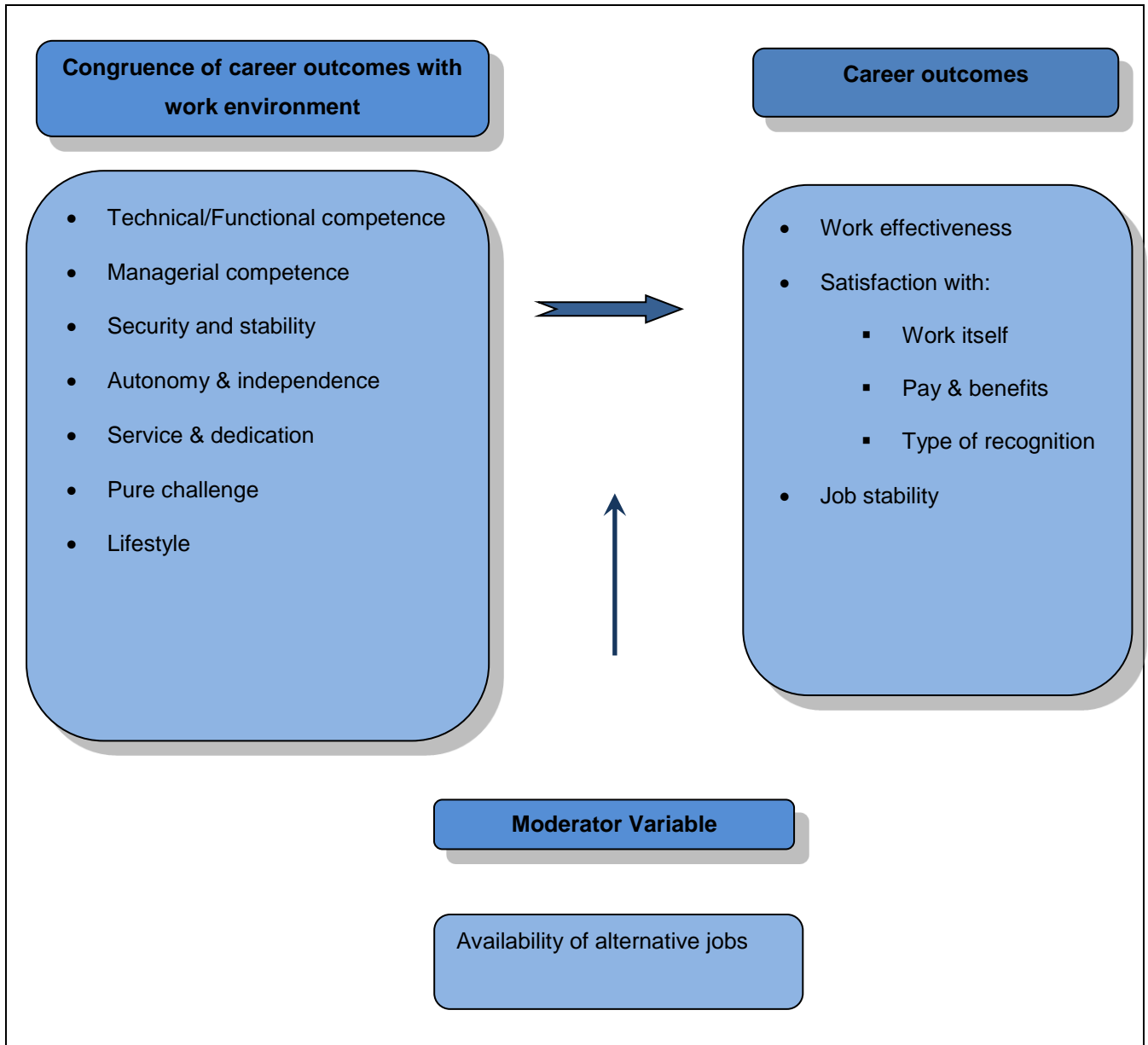
Figure 2.2: Schein's model of career anchors

2.3.1.2. The octagonal model of career anchors

Feldman and Bolino (1996) reviewed Schein's career anchor model in their theoretical and methodological paper, suggesting that Schein's work needed refining, as it was underspecified theoretically and untested empirically. They propose the octagonal model as an alternative (Chapman, 2009; Wils, Wils & Tremblay, 2010). They argue that the

centrality of career anchors applies within each of the three groups of anchors (talents and abilities, motives and needs and attitudes and values), as opposed to within all the anchor as per Schein's proposition (Wils *et al.,* 2010). They propose that understanding the relationships between career anchors would lead to a greater knowledge about their meaning to individuals. It would clarify which career anchors are complementary (having common characteristics) and which are incongruent (having opposing characteristics) (Barclay, 2009).

Feldman and Bolino (1996) grouped the career anchors according to their commonalities. They agree with Schein (1990) that the anchors relate as follows: technical competence, managerial competence and entrepreneurial creativity anchors pertain to the work *talents* of individuals. They centre on the work that an individual performs day by day. The security and stability, autonomy and independence and lifestyle anchors pertain to *motives and needs;* they centre on basic personal desires and personal lives. Lastly, the service dedication and pure challenge anchors represent *attitudes and values;* they represent the ways that individuals identify with their occupations and with their organisational cultures (Wils *et al.,* 2010).

According to Feldman and Bolino (1996), an individual can have a dominant career anchor in each of these three categories. They argue that there is a primary and a secondary anchor and these are thus complementary. They are adamant that an individual can possess more than one anchor owing to personal ambivalence towards certain career choices or objectives.

The octagonal career anchor model (Figure 2.3) thus illustrates the proximity of compatible career anchors (i.e. technical competence and challenge), and an opposition between career anchors that are considered to be incompatible (i.e. in diametrically opposed corners, such as security and stability and entrepreneurial creativity).
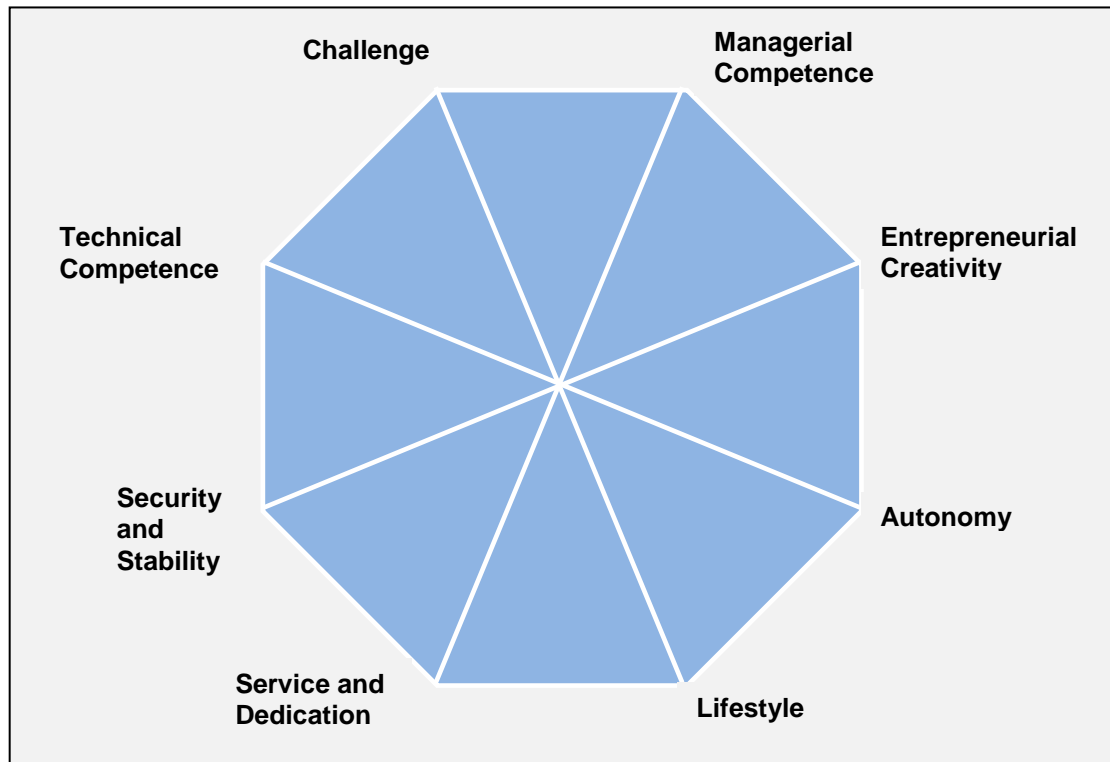
Figure 2.3: Octagonal model of career anchors

2.3.1.3. *The circular value structure model*

Schwartz (1992) introduced the theory of the universality of value structure. Values are said to be universal because they depend on common requirements such as satisfaction of needs of individuals as biological organisms, requisites of coordinating social interaction, and survival welfare and need of groups (Wils *et al.,* 2010). Schwartz (1992) explains the dynamics of values on two levels. A circle is divided twice at right angles, making four quadrants. The horizontal axis puts on opposite sides *openness to change* and *conservation,* whereas the vertical axis contrasts *self-transcendence* and *self-enhancement.* The circle is further divided into 10 motivational domains, namely self direction, stimulation, hedonism, achievement, power, security, conformity, tradition, benevolence and universalism (Wils *et al.,* 2010). Similar to Feldman and Bolino (1996), the circular model illustrates relations in that two adjacent motivational domains correspond to compatibility whereas two diametrically opposed motivational domains illustrate conflict (Wils *et al.,* 2010).

2.3.1.4. Link between motivational domains and career anchors

Schwartz (1992) proposes that motivational domains and career anchors overlap from the standpoint of values. He argues that some motivational domains are directly linked to career anchors. He pairs the motivational domains with career anchors, as shown in Table 2.1:

Table 2.1

Link between motivational domains and career anchors

Motivational domains	Career anchors	Common values shared between domain and anchor
Self direction	Autonomy and independence and Entrepreneurial creativity	Independence, freedom, creativity
Stimulation	Pure challenge	Varied life, exciting life
Power	Managerial competence	Social power, authority, wealth and recognition
Security	Security and stability and lifestyle	Family security, health
Benevolence	Service and dedication	Meaning of life, mature love
Achievement	Technical competence	Knowledge and reason

(Wils et al., 2010)

The values form a continuum, thus new values can be added or obsolete ones can be removed. This makes the model flexible and thus easy to use.
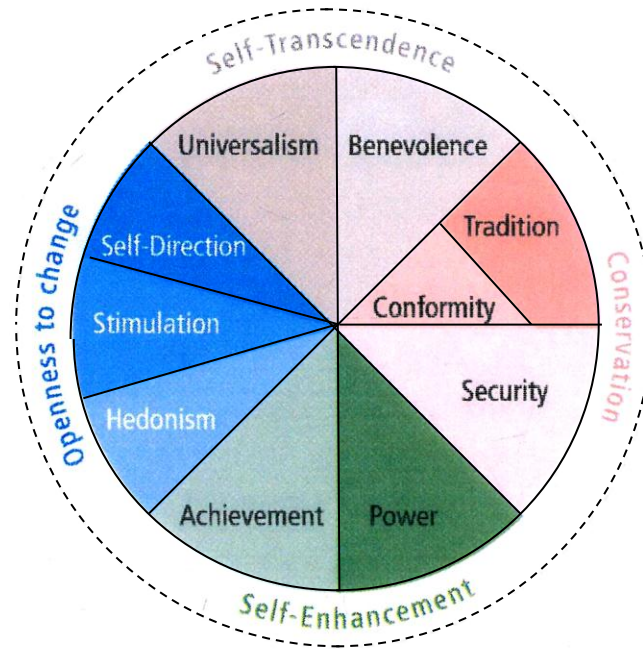
Figure 2.4: Swartz's (1992) value structure model

2.3.1.5. Integration of career anchor models

In the volatile labour market conditions of the 21st century the external career is bound to take different shapes and forms and one may be forced to take decisions that have not been carefully considered (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011; Tladinyane, 2006). For the individual to make correct choices under these conditions, it is imperative that they have a deeper sense of career identity and self-awareness. It is in the process of career development where one develops one's anchor and the career anchor that enables the careerist to make the right choices. Career anchors thus lead to a deeper self-awareness and a clear career identity (Ellison & Schreuder, 2000).

Schein (1978) argues that individuals can only have one career anchor that will guide their career decisions and that anchor will remain stable throughout their career life. However, Feldman and Bolino (1996), in their octagonal model of career anchors, argue that one to three anchors cluster together to form an individual's career preferences. They posit that the centrality of career anchors applies within each of the three groups of anchors (talents and abilities, motives and needs, and attitudes and values) as opposed to within the entire anchor as per Schein's proposition. No empirical evidence has refuted the possibility of

multiple anchors; even Schein's empirical evidence suggested that individuals could hold more than one anchor, but with one dominating over others (Schein, 1978; Tladinyane, 2006). Schwartz (1992) incorporated career anchors in his circular value model structure, as values are said to be universal. His main assumption is that, if values are universal, and career anchors can be directly linked to the values, then career anchors are also universal and the theory of career anchors can be applied anywhere in the world and across workplaces. This model is flexible, thus as values change the model may bend and new career anchors may also be introduced. This may lead to a great future in the study of career anchors.

In spite of the loopholes in Schein's career anchor model, it remains a solid model based on sound research methodology and it provides a fertile ground for future research. For that reason, this particular study was based on Schein's model of career anchors. The construct of career anchors was selected because it is based on the individual's self-insight, it is a subjective concept and it is based on experience and systematic self-diagnosis (Schein, 1978). All these qualities of the construct may prove useful in the turbulent work environment of the 21st century. Career anchors were measured with the Career Orientations Inventory (COI) (1990) which was developed by Schein.

Table 2.2

Comparisons of career anchor models

Model	Schein's career anchor model (1990)	Feldman and Bolino's octagonal career anchor model (1996)	Schwartz's circular value structure model of career anchors (1992)
Construct Definition	Career anchor is an evolving self concept of what a person sees him or herself as being good at, what one's needs and motives are and what values govern one's career choices.	Career anchor is an evolving self concept of what a person sees him or herself as being good at, what one's needs and motives are and what values govern one's career choices.	Career anchor is an evolving self concept of what a person sees him or herself as being good at, what one's needs and motives are and what values govern one's career choices.
Categories and Sub-dimensions	**Talent-Based:** Technical/Functional Competence Managerial Competence Entrepreneurial Creativity **Need and Motive based** Autonomy and Independence Service and Dedication to a cause Pure Challenge **Attitude and Values** Lifestyle	**Talent-Based:** Technical/Functional Competence Managerial Competence Entrepreneurial Creativity **Need and Motive based** Autonomy and Independence Service and Dedication to a cause Pure Challenge **Attitude and Values**	Technical/Functional Competence- **Achievement** Managerial Competence-**Power** Security and Stability - **Security** Entrepreneurial Creativity-**Self Direction** Autonomy and Independence- **Self Direction** Service and Dedication to a cause-**Benevolence** Pure Challenge-**Stimulation** Lifestyle-**Security**

Table 2.2

Comparisons of career anchor models

	Security and Stability	Lifestyle Security and Stability	
Characteristics	• One career anchor for life • Define one's skill and one's worth; • Develop in the early stages of one's career (5-10 years of experience) • They help to guide choices about job changing; and • They constitute a source of stability across a person's work life.	• Dominant career anchor in each of the three categories, • There is a primary and a secondary anchor, hence these are complementary. • Individual can possess more than one anchor owing to personal ambivalence towards certain career choices or objectives.	• Values are said to be universal, thus career anchors are universal • As values change over time, so can career anchors • More than one anchor can be seen in one individual just as one can possess more than one value.
What is the usefulness for career guidance in early-life career stage?	Enables individuals to choose suitable careers and have stable careers in the midst of an unstable labour market.	Enables flexibility in career choice, in that an individual can choose to pursue a career in any of the three areas they are anchored in.	The theory of career anchors can be applied anywhere in the world and across workplaces. Model is flexible, thus as values change the model may bend and new career anchors may also be introduced.

2.3.2. Models of employability

The following section will discuss four theoretical models of employability. These will include Fugate and Kinicki's (2008) dispositional model, Van der Heijde and Van der Heijden's (2006) competency model approach, Beukes's (2009) self-regulatory model and Bezuidenhout's (2010) employability attributes. An integration of the four models that will highlight their similarities and differences will be provided and the model that best suits the current study will be identified.

2.3.2.1. Dispositional approach to employability

Fugate *et al.* (2004) define employability as a psychosocial construct comprising individual characteristics that facilitate adaptive behaviours. These, in turn, affect and enhance individuals' work adaptability. Fugate and Kinicki (2008) define dispositional employability as "a latent multidimensional construct" (p.506). They suggest that dispositional employability is seen in those individuals who possess individual attributes that foster adaptive behaviours and positive employment outcomes, and it more accurately defines the action oriented, proactive and adaptive qualities that employers now emphasise. It

facilitates seeking and identification of opportunities even before these are made available to an individual, and enables the individual to identify personal changes needed for success (Fugate *et al.*, 2004; Fugate & Kinicki, 2008).Therefore, dispositional employability emphasises pro-active orientation toward adaptation.

According to Fugate and Kinicki (2008), dispositional employability comprises openness to changes at work, work and career resilience, work and career pro-activity, career motivation and work identity.

Figure 2.5: Dispositional model of employability (Fugate & Kinicki, 2008)

a Openness to changes at work

Fugate and Kinicki (2008) assert that openness to change opens up doors to new opportunities which may promote learning, and by being open, one is able to identify and realise career opportunities. Individuals who are open to change are most likely to be flexible and adaptable when they encounter unfamiliar environments, thus openness fosters favourable individual attitudes towards changing circumstances in the workplace.

Organisations in the 21st century encourage openness to change and seek to employ such individuals, as they are most likely to see change as a challenge rather than a threat. Such individuals are almost certainly innovative and comfortable with breaking new ground, thus enhancing personal and organisational growth (Fugate *et al.*, 2004; Fugate & Kinicki, 2008).

b Work and career resilience

Resilience is defined as an optimistic view to life, even in the midst of challenge; resilient individuals are those who frequently undertake self-evaluation and continue to maintain a positive self-image under turbulent circumstances (Fugate & Kinicki, 2008). Resilient individuals in all likelihood are flexible as well, and have a positive view of the future even if the present does not look good. They are persistent in the pursuit of desired outcomes or goals. In the workplace, career resilient individuals are most likely to appreciate career changes and learn as much as they can. Their learning contributes to the development of their career identity and thus increases their employability (Fugate & Kinicki, 2008).

c Work and career pro-activity

Individuals with high levels of dispositional employability are most likely to proactively acquire information about the work environments within which they exist. They proactively seek information that may affect their jobs or careers negatively or positively to devise coping strategies in advance (Fugate & Kinicki, 2008). By so doing these individuals realise and seize career opportunities that arise.

d Career motivation

Fugate and Kinicki (2008) suggest that highly motivated individuals tend to plan in order to be able to cope in periods of boredom and frustration. Career motivated individuals are inclined to take control of their careers by pursuing learning opportunities such as training or even formal education in times when the job is not satisfying. By so doing, they are able to persist through such times whilst also contributing towards increasing their employability.

e Work identity

Fugate and Kinicki (2008) suggest that career identity provides direction for future opportunities and behaviours while at the same time organising past experiences. It assembles the past, current and future career experiences and aspirations into an understandable whole. If individuals have a clear work identity, they are most likely to be confident in their capabilities and motivated. Thus, career identity supports dispositional employability.

f Social and human capital

Another important aspect of employability is social and human capital. Fugate and Kinicki (2008) explain that social capital consists of all the resources available in social networks that can be beneficial to an individual's career. Individuals who have a wide social network are able to identify and realise career opportunities which they otherwise would not have, thus they are more employable. Similarly, employability can also be influenced by human factors such as age, gender, work experience, education and training. Even though one cannot change one's age and gender, researching where one may be marketable with one's age and gender may also be necessary. In addition, investing in training and education may be of importance. All these factors contribute to an individual's employability levels.

2.3.2.2. Competence-based approach to employability

Van der Heijde and Van der Heijden (2006) argue that as developments enforced a reorganisation of the structure of work, and transition from a job-based HRM system to a competence-based, person-related HRM system, the concept of employability also changed from being job based to being competence based. They thus propose a competency-based approach to employability derived from an expansion of the resource-based view of organisations. According to the resource-based view, competences make it possible for organisations to reach their performance goals and sustain their competitiveness.

In the competence-based approach, employability is defined "as the continuous fulfilling, acquiring or creating of work through the optimal use of competences" (Van der Heijde and Van der Heijden, 2006, p.453). Competency, on the other hand, is defined as a set of observable performance dimensions including individual characteristics such as

knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviours that are linked to high performance and provide organisations with sustainable competitive advantage (Athey & Orth, 1999, as cited in Van der Heijde & Van der Heijden, 2006).

Van der Heijde and Van der Heijden (2006) agree with Fugate and Kinicki (2008) that employability is a multidimensional construct. They propose that the competence-based employability model comprises five competencies, namely occupational expertise, which is the core competency and is complemented by four general competences: anticipation and optimisation, personal flexibility, corporate sense and balance.
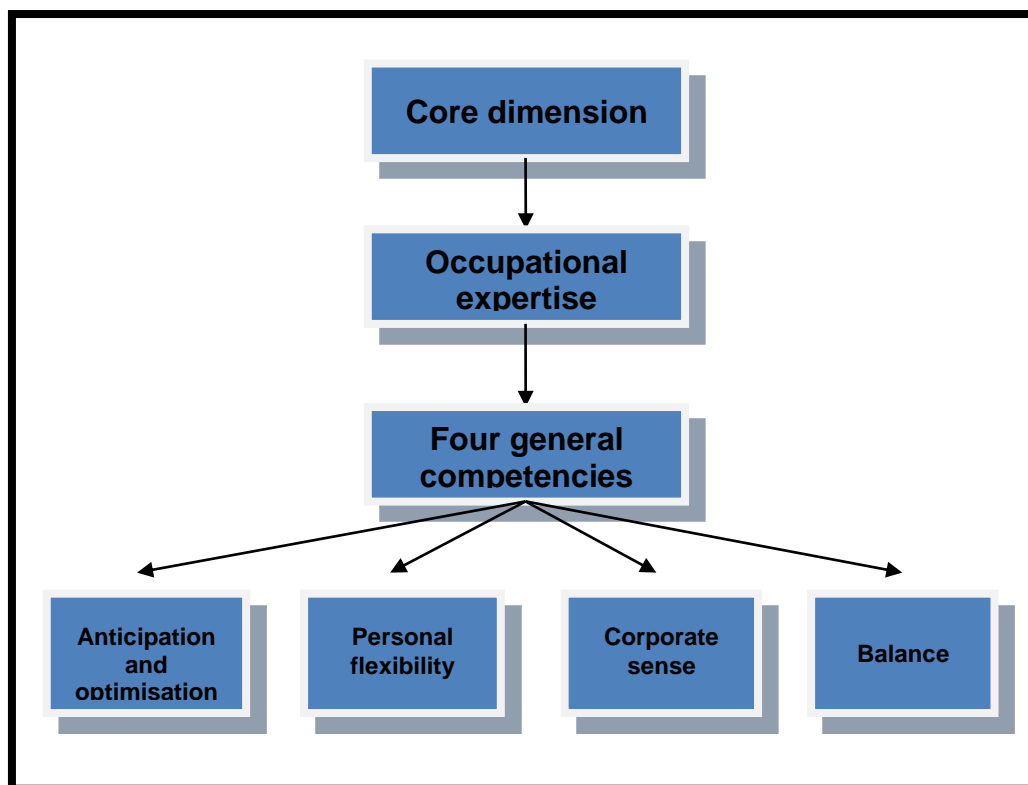
Figure 2.6: Competence-based model of employability (Van der Heijde & Van Heijden, 2006)

a   Occupational expertise

Occupational expertise is the first dimension of employability and a prerequisite for positive career outcomes (Van der Heijde & Van der Heijden, 2006). In the knowledge-based economy, occupational expertise is a significant contributing factor for the vitality of organisations. Individuals who have expert knowledge are more likely to be able to enter and move within the labour market and maintain employment than those lacking in expertise. In times of recession, individuals with high occupational expertise are most likely

to be retained as they also offer hope for the survival of the organisation. Thus occupational expertise facilitates employability (Van der Heijde & Van der Heijden, 2006).

The second and third dimensions of employability, according to this theory, are anticipation and optimisation, and personal flexibility. These concern adaptation to changes that are relevant in the light of performance at career or job level. Anticipation and optimisation are proactive and self initiated, whereas personal adaptation is passive and reactive (Van der Heijde & Van der Heijden, 2006).

b Anticipation and optimisation

Anticipation and optimisation entail pro-active change such as preparing for future work changes in order to maintain employment, whether in the same or different organisation, and to strive for best career outcomes. Similar studies in the subject of employability (Fugate *et al.,* 2004) agree that in this knowledge intensive labour market pro-activity is an important aspect of employability, as career development and management are no longer a responsibility of organisations but of the individual (Van der Heijde & Van der Heijden, 2006).

c Personal flexibility

In cases where change was not anticipated, such as downsizing, or mergers that were planned surreptitiously personal flexibility is important. Individuals who are ready and embrace change are most likely to accept the situation and move on from the disappointment more quickly than those who resist change. Such individuals see an opportunity for something new and better in the midst of a challenge (Van der Heijde & Van der Heijden, 2006). Research has shown (see Fugate *et al.,* 2004) that adaptability is an important component of personal flexibility. Adaptable employees will derive greater benefit and further their career development from different experiences because they welcome change (Van der Heijde & Van der Heijden, 2006).

d Corporate sense

Employees with a high corporate sense are those who see themselves as part of the organisation, who identify with corporate goals, who participate as members of the organisation and accept collective responsibility for decision making. Beyond that, employees with a high corporate sense will display organisational citizenship by being involved in networks other than those directly involved in their specific line of work. They

willingly volunteer their time for the benefit of the organisation (Van der Heijde & Van der Heijden, 2006). Van der Heijde and Van der Heijden (2006) believe that such employees are most likely to retain their jobs and develop more quickly in organisations and hence organisations are looking to employ such individuals.

e   Balance

The last dimension in the competence-based model of employability is balance. Van der Heijde and Van der Heijden (2006) define balance as "compromising between opposing employer's interest as well as one's own opposing work, career and private interests and between employer and employee's interest" (p.456). Working life is characterised by strongly competing demands that are not easy to balance. Handy (1994) realised that there is a paradox in the workplace, where employers are looking for highly committed yet highly flexible employees. To remain employable in today's workplace it is important that individuals commit to their careers and are flexible in terms of where it takes them (as cited in Van der Heijde & Van der Heijden, 2006). Weick (1996) agrees and points out another contradiction, where employees have to be specialised yet despecialised. He suggests that it is beneficial for employees to be able to alternate between specialist and generalist occupations in today's boundary-less careers in order to be employable (as cited in Van der Heijde & Van der Heijden, 2006).

2.3.2.3. Self-regulatory model of employability

Beukes (2009, p.9) defines employability "as the application and continuous development of a range of supportive competencies and attributes through a series of reiterative developmental stages that enhance the individual's opportunities for accessing and sustaining employment opportunities" (as cited in Beukes, 2010). He suggests that the individual is an active agent in developing and sustaining own employability. He thus proposes a self-regulatory approach to employability (Beukes, 2010). Due to the ever-changing work context, Beukes (2009) saw a need to look at employability through a career-oriented model aimed at guiding individuals in managing themselves through a process of continuous learning and re-integration. Whilst this model was developed for individuals in the school-to-work transition, it can be applied to any career life stage.

The self-regulatory model involves the following five sets of developmental stages; audit and alignment; career and goal clarity; formal and informal learning; self-presentation; and

competency trade-off. Each of these is supported by a set of competencies, such as basic skills (audit and alignment), goal driven behaviour (career goal clarity), creative learning skills (formal and informal learning), communication skills (self-presentation), and business acumen (competency trade-off) (Beukes, 2010).

Figure 2.7: Self-regulatory model of employability (Beukes, 2009)

a Stage 1: Audit and alignment

In this first stage, individuals conduct an audit of their competencies in relation to labour demands and employment opportunities. Success at this stage is measured by the individual's insight into their value in the market and their goal orientation (Beukes, 2009; 2010).

In conducting the audit, individuals seek information that will lead to an understanding of their own competencies, skills and interests and where these are in demand. With a clearer understanding of their competencies and where they can apply them, individuals then develop career goals they want to attain (Beukes, 2009; 2010). This can be done through the narrative approach, where they can look back into their career and identify themes and patterns, form a sense of career identity and develop general goals for the future (Beukes, 2010; Amundson *et al.*, 2009). Individuals can also go through an assessment centre, which will yield objective and holistic results in terms of their values, interests, motivation, skills and knowledge (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011). In studying the

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labour market and where there is a demand for their competencies, platforms such as professional associations, internet job portals and newspapers can provide information regarding opportunities in their field of career (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011).

The basic skills that will enable the individual to navigate successfully through this stage include

- *literacy*, to assist in the process of gathering and understanding information;
- *numeracy*, to enable the individual to calculate their value in the market and be able to compare offerings from different organisations;
- *computer skills,* to help them in the job search and research in order to keep up with new developments in their field of interest; and
- *planning and organising,* for effective gathering of relevant information and putting timelines to this process of alignment (Beukes, 2010).

Beukes (2009) believes that if individuals have successfully developed these supporting skills and are able to channel them appropriately, they will have a greater capacity to realistically assess their competency value and align that value to current demands.

b   Stage 2: Career goal clarity

Linnenbrink and Pintrich (2000) suggest that goals are cognitive representations of what individuals are trying to attain and that these goals can guide and direct behaviour (as cited in Beukes, 2010). This second stage focuses on setting specific career goals in order to achieve the main alignment purpose. Desired outcomes in this stage are to have a clear and measurable career goal that one is working towards attaining (Beukes, 2010). It has been suggested that goal setting increases behaviour change due to presumably increased motivation to act in a particular way (Beukes, 2010).

Schreuder and Coetzee (2011) argue that in the turbulent labour market of the 21st century, it is important for individuals to have flexible career goals to enable them to cope, should things not go according to the desired plan. The authors suggest that career goals should be formulated in terms of long and short-term plans, and short-term goals should be congruent with the long-term goals in the sense that they should identify factors necessary to get to the long-term goal.

Beukes (2010) proposes that goal driven behaviour is the supporting competency of the career goal clarity stage. By knowing how to reach short-term goals, individuals can

progress to further goals. This cycle of goal achievement could assist the individual in meeting the challenges of the labour market, thus remaining employable.

c *Stage 3: Formal and informal learning*

Lifelong learning is a very important pre-requisite for employability, as it helps individuals to take responsibility and control of their own development (Tamkin, 1997). According to Beukes (2009), the formal and informal learning stages of the self-regulatory model are based on this notion of lifelong learning. Lifelong learning can take place formally, through formal education; however, due to the time and costs involved in formal learning, informal (out of classroom) learning seems to be providing individuals with sufficient advantage. Informal learning can be accessed through on the job training, theoretical training provided in the workplace, or through networking in professional associations (Tamkin, 1997; Davies, 2000).

According to Tamkin (1997), the rapid changes that have taken place in technology in the 21st century and the need to adjust to the prerequisites of the knowledge economy have brought about the need for lifelong learning. Individuals need to continuously up-skill themselves in order to keep up with the competencies that are required for successful careers in the knowledge economy (Beukes, 2010). Beukes (2009) suggests that this will require a personal commitment to lifelong learning, coupled with a willingness to reinvent oneself as is necessary.

Beukes (2009) proposes that this formal and informal learning stage is supported by the competency of creative learning. Creative learning is the use of all relevant resources to learn new competencies and involves the ability to find ways of overcoming learning difficulties (Beukes, 2010). These creative ways of learning may involve strategies such as group discussions where knowledge is shared, brainstorming sessions, and virtual learning spaces such as online or shared drive information libraries. Organisations are increasingly tapping into these new creative learning approaches to share knowledge and up-skill employees (Tamkin, 1997). By the end of this stage, the individual should have documented proof of learning that has taken place, which supports the goals set in earlier stages (Beukes, 2010).

This stage of self-presentation is very important in the concept of employability. An individual could have all the qualifications and experience, but if they are not able to articulately communicate their vocational self to others, they may be placed in jobs they are over qualified for and not experience the fullness of what they are worth (Beukes, 2010). Beukes (2009) defines this stage as a process where individuals negotiate an agreement between their competencies and the organisation's package; the critical outcome being a mutual agreement (Beukes, 2009). This is achieved by developing a personal brand and being able to succinctly articulate it in less than ten minutes (Beukes, 2009).

Everyone has a personal brand; however, not everyone is aware of this and thus they do not manage it effectively or use it strategically to sell themselves. Individuals' success is significantly affected by how well they have arranged, crystallised and labelled themselves. Employers are impressed by individuals who display a high level of self-awareness and who are confident in what they have to offer (Beukes, 2009).

Hines (2004) argues that an important benefit of personal branding is to distinguish one's offering in a crowded market place, hence it is important that a personal brand is a true reflection of one's abilities, character and values built on strength and uniqueness (as cited in Beukes, 2009). According to Beukes (2009), it is very important that the concept of personal branding is not abused by creating a false self; it should be about demonstrating self-knowledge and self-expression.

The self-presentation stage is supported by the competency of communication, namely written, verbal or behavioural communication. Success in this stage is measured by how well one is able to communicate one's personal brand and thus reach a mutual agreement with one's organisation (Beukes, 2009).

e   Stage 5: Competency trade-off

The competency trade-off stage involves actual exchange between the individual's competencies and the organisation's remuneration package (Beukes, 2009). Individuals not only benefit in terms of the organisation's remuneration package, but also get to develop their competencies further, thereby being able to maintain employment and grow in the organisation, or getting other jobs that will be more suitable and compensate for

their newly developed competencies. Thus, individuals can periodically revert back to stage one and re-evaluate and re-align themselves based on the newly acquired competencies, which makes the self-regulatory model a cyclical model (Beukes, 2010).

The competency trade-off stage is supported by the competency of business acumen. Beukes (2009) defines business acumen as the ability to make good judgements and take quick effective decisions regarding one's occupation. The goal at this stage is to be in a place where an exchange of competencies and organisational benefits is fair, where one can develop one's competencies further and re-align oneself to the newly developed competencies (Beukes, 2010).

In summary, the self-regulatory employability model provides a practical strategy for individuals to manage their employability effectively. It provides a continuous process of renewal and development in order to maintain employability. It can be useful and beneficial at any stage of career development (Beukes, 2010).

2.3.2.4. Bezuidenhout's employability attributes framework

Bezuidenhout (2010) with Coetzee (2010) developed an employability attributes framework with students in the South African higher education context in mind. The framework consists of eight core career-related employability attributes that are deemed important for increasing an individual's likelihood of securing and maintaining employment opportunities (Bezuidenhout, 2010; Coetzee, 2010). The framework comprises the following attributes; Career self-management, Cultural competence, Self-efficacy, Career resilience, Sociability, Entrepreneurial orientation, Pro-activity and Emotional literacy. Figure 2.8 represents the employability attributes framework; the attributes are discussed below.
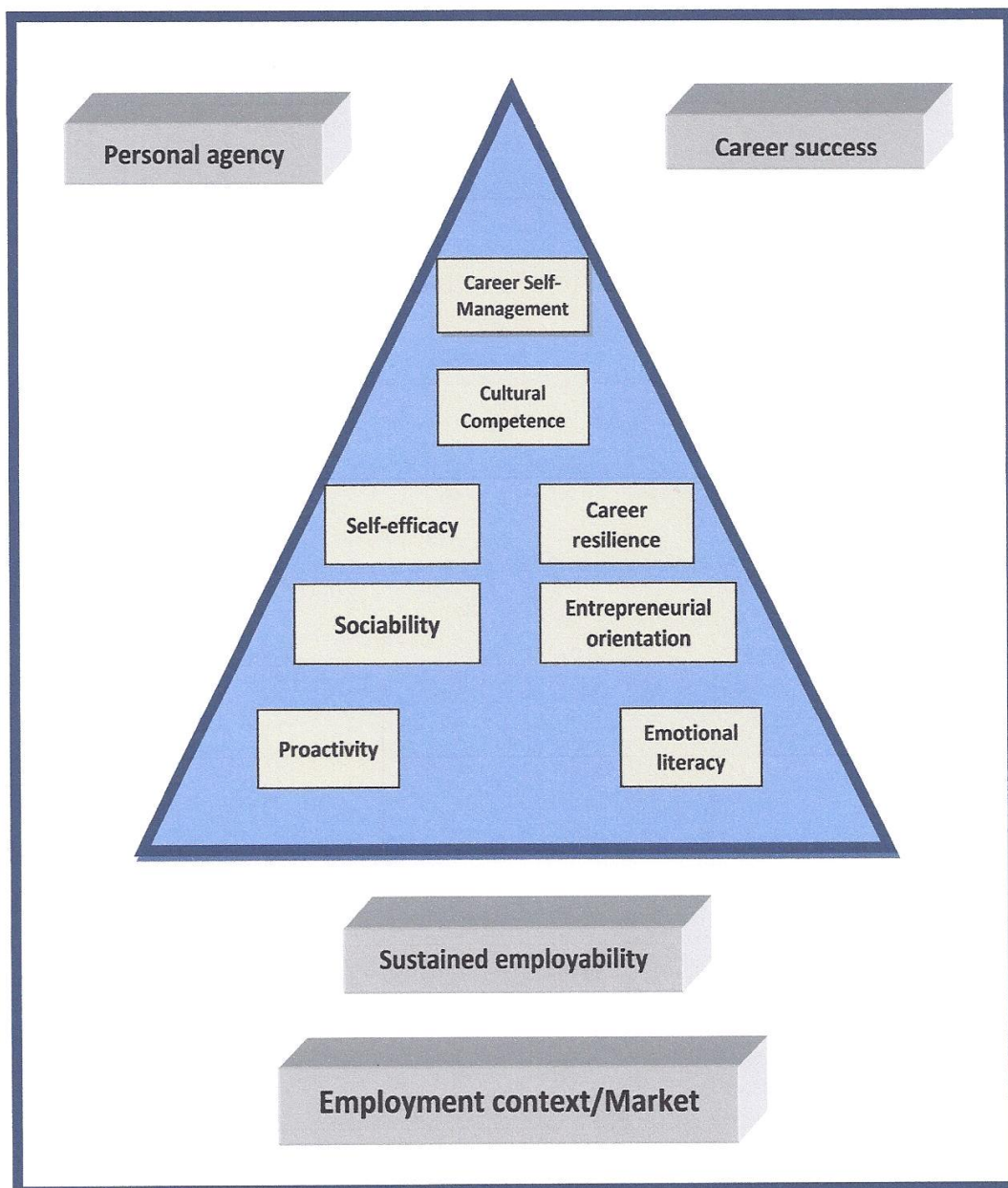
Figure 2.8: Conceptual overview of the skills and attributes underlying students' employability (adapted from Coetzee, 2011, p. 18)

a. Career self-management

Career self-management refers to an individual's ability to maintain employability through a process of life-long learning as well as career planning and management efforts. It involves the ability to reflect on one's career aspirations as well as a clear sense of what one wants to achieve in one's career; the ability to recognise the skills needed to be successful in one's career as well as the actions to take in order to achieve career goals.

b. Cultural competence

Cultural competence is the metacognitive ability to understand, act and interface successfully within a diverse cultural environment (Bezuidenhout, 2010). It involves knowing the customs of other cultures as well as understanding their beliefs and values and being able to initiate and maintain relationships with individuals from diverse cultures. Cultural competence is especially critical in a diverse employment context such as the South African workplace.

c. Self-efficacy

Self-efficacy refers to an individual's perception of the extent of difficulty of career-related or performance related tasks that they believe they are going to attempt as well as their perception of how well they will be able to execute the required actions in order to deal with those tasks. In addition, self-efficacy refers to the extent to which that perception will persist, despite obstacles (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011). Self-efficacy also refers to the estimate that an individual makes of his or her ability to cope, perform and thrive (Bezuidenhout, 2010).

d. Career resilience

Bezuidenhout (2010) describes career resilience as a personal disposition that facilitates a high level of adaptability, self-confidence, competence as well as confidence, irrespective of difficult career situations. It involves an individual's ability to adapt to changing situations by accepting job and organisational changes, looking forward to working with different and new people, being willing to take risks as well as having self-confidence (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011). Individuals with career resilience will display qualities such as self-confidence in their knowledge and skills, being open to feedback and learning from mistakes, and openness to change in their environment.

e. Sociability

Sociability refers to the ability to be open to, establish and maintain social contacts, as well as utilise formal and informal networks for the benefit of one's career (Bezuidenhout, 2010). One can increase employability through sociability by building a network of friends who could advance one's career, using networks in order to search for and find new job opportunities, actively seeking feedback from other people in order to progress in one's career.

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f. Entrepreneurial orientation

Entrepreneurial orientation refers to an individual's preference for innovation and creativity, a tendency to take risks, a need for achievement, a tolerance for uncertainty as well as a preference for autonomy in the exploitation of opportunities within the career environment and the creation of something valuable (Bezuidenhout, 2010).

g. Pro-activity

Bezuidenhout (2010) defines pro-activity as an individual's tendency to engage in active role orientations that lead to future-oriented and self-initiated action in order to change oneself and one's situation. People who are pro-active are most likely to identify opportunities before others do, improve on their knowledge and skills in order to ensure career progress, adapt to changing situations, and persist in spite of difficult career circumstances. Such people are more employable than their re-active counterparts.

h. Emotional literacy

According to Bezuidenhout (2010), emotional literacy involves an individual's ability to use emotions adaptively as well as the quality of individuals' ability to read, understand and control their own and other people's emotions (Bezuidenhout, 2010, Coetzee, 2010).

2.3.2.5. Integration of employability models

This section discussed four models of employability, namely Fugate and Kinicki's (2008) Dispositional Model of Employability; Van Heijde and Van Heijden's (2006) Competence-based Employability Model, and Beukes's (2009) Self-regulatory Model of employability. These models share some commonalities and but there are also significant differences. The commonalities include the fact that all three models view employability from the perspective of the individual and their active role in developing their own employability. The difference lies in their underlying core concepts of employability. Fugate and Kinicki (2008) focus on the multidimensional nature of employability that enables employees to proactively adapt to their work and career environments, thereby increasing their employability. Van Heijde and Van Heijden (2006) believe that individual competencies enable one to obtain and maintain employability. Beukes (2009), on the other hand, stands on the notion that employability is a result of a process of reiterative developmental stages that enhance the individual's opportunities to obtain and maintain employment.

In the South African labour market where individuals are still in the process of rehabilitation from the apartheid regime (Webster & Von Holdt, 2005), self will and adaptability, as Fugate and Kinicki (2008) suggest, may not be very effective in enhancing individuals' employability. The emphasis of Van Heijde and Van Heijden (2006) on competencies may also not work in the SA context. Whilst great improvement has been seen in employment practices 18 years into the democratic SA, individuals are still psychologically holding on to ideas that employability for the previously disadvantaged groups is still hindered by employers' prejudices as most organisations are still led by those that benefited from or even perpetuated the injustices of the past (Webster & Von Holdt, 2005). Beukes's (2009) self-regulatory model may be more acceptable as it was developed for the South African context. It gives a clear process that individuals can follow in building up their employability regardless of where they are in their careers. Each individual can adapt and personalise this cyclical process and start to see growth and development in their career. The basic competencies that underlie each stage are not technical competencies that are career specific and can only be attained via formal education, but are basic competencies that can be learnt at any stage in one's career. The model is accommodating and flexible in that it is applicable whether one is in the school-to-work transition, career re-entry or even career development stages. It meets the individual at his or her point of need. For this reason, the researcher finds it suitable for this specific study.

Whilst Beuke's model will be the basis of this particular study, the Employability Attribute Scale (EAS) (Bezuidenhout, 2010; Coetzee, 2010) was used to measure employability. The EAS is based on Bezuidenhout's model of employability. It was deemed a suitable tool as it was developed with students in the South African higher education context in mind, yet can also be applied to individuals at any career stage. The eight core career-related employability attributes that are covered in framework are deemed important for increasing an individual's likelihood of securing and maintaing employment opportunities. Whilst Bezuidenhout's (2010) model is developed for a South African workplace and has a great instrument to measure employability, the researcher found Beuke's (2009) model more useful and easy to apply in the South African context yet found Bezuidenhout's (2010) EAS more user friendly and can be applied to any model as it covers a wide range of employability attributes.

Table 2.3

Comparisons of employability models

Model	Dispositional approach (Fugate,2004)	Competence-based approach (Van Heijde & Van Heijden, 2006)	Self-regulatory employability model (Beukes, 2009)	Employability attribute scale (Bezuidenhout, 2010)
Construct Definition	A multidimensional constellation of individual characteristics that predispose employees to (pro) actively adapt to their work and career environments.	A competence-based approach to employability implies the ability to obtain a job and to keep employed, within or outside one's current organisation.	The application and continuous development of a range of supportive competencies and attributes through a series of reiterative developmental stages that enhance the individual's opportunities for accessing and sustaining employment opportunities.	A psychosocial construct representing career-related characteristics that promote adaptive cognition, behaviour and affect as well as enhance an individual's suitability for appropriate and sustainable employment opportunities
Categories and Sub dimensions	(1) openness to changes at work (2) work and career resilience (3) work and career proactivity (4) career motivation (5) social and human capital (6) career identity	(1) occupational expertise (2) anticipation and optimisation (3) personal flexibility (4) corporate sense (5) balance	Stage 1: audit and alignment (basic skills) Stage 2: career goal clarity (goal driven) Stage 3: formal and informal learning (creative learning) Stage 4: self-presentation (communication) Stage 5: competency trade-off (business acumen)	(1)career self-management, (2)cultural competence, (3)self-efficacy, (4)career resilience, (5)sociability, (6)entrepreneurial orientation, (7)pro-activity and (8)emotional literacy.

Characteristics	Adaptability	Adaptability	Life-long learning	Pro-activity
	Life-long learning	Life-long learning	Pro-activity	Lifelong learning
	Pro-activity	Pro-activity	Motivation	Self will
	Motivation	Motivation	Periodic assessment	
	Periodic assessment			
How is employability achieved	Proactive adaptability and flexibility	Proactive adaptability and flexibility	Progressing though reiterative stages of lifelong learning and reflection	Developing and adopting the 8 employability attributes
What is the usefulness for career guidance in early-life career stage?	Provides information on the characteristics needed for employability	Provides information on the abilities needed for employability	Enhanced self-awareness Can be formally measured/assessed South African relevance Practical tool for individuals to understand and develop their own employability	South African relevance measured by the Employability Attribute Scale (EAS) Enhanced self awareness

(Beukes, 2010; Bezuidenhout, 2010; Coetzee, 2010)

2.4. THEORETICAL INTEGRATION: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CAREER ANCHORS AND EMPLOYABILITY

In the literature review, *career anchors* and *employability* were defined. The theoretical foundations upon which each concept is based were also discussed. It was established that there are differences yet also commonalities between the two concepts, thus a relationship exists between the concepts. This section seeks to discuss the nature of the theoretical relationship, thus answering question two of this study, namely: Does a theoretical relationship exist between career anchors and employability?

Figure 2.8 depicts the proposed theoretical relationship between career anchors and employability.

Changing nature of work and careers

- ❖ Accelerating changing perspective of the meaning of work and career success
- ❖ Careers are transitional, flexible and boundary-less
- ❖ Restructuring, downsizing, layoff, flattened organizational structures, less advancement opportunities, leading to lack of loyalty, dedication and commitment.

Career Anchors	Employability
Self perceived talents, abilities,needs,motives, attitudes and values	Capacity to gain initial employment and maintaining employment status
Subjective in nature	Ability to self-sufficiently move within the labour market
Develop in the early years of experience	Enhanced by factors such as:
Stable throughout career lifespan	❖ Skills and abilities (analysing, communication, problem solving)
Motivation for career choice	❖ Attitudes and behaviour (Flexibility, adaptability)
❖ Technical/Functional competence	❖ Individual characteristics (age, gender, race, health and wellness)
❖ General managerial competence	❖ Labour market (condition of the labour market, availability of opportunities in the market)
❖ Autonomy/ Independence	
❖ Security/stability	
❖ Entrepreneurial creativity	
❖ Service dedication	
❖ Pure challenge	
❖ Lifestyle	

Career decision making

- ❖ Make informed career choices
- ❖ Hold internal career together
- ❖ Open up career opportunities
- ❖ Stability in an unstable labour market
- ❖ Enjoy successful careers in times of uncertainty
- ❖ Subjective career success
- ❖ Enhance career mobility

Figure 2.9: The theoretical relationship between career anchors and employability

A career anchor acts as an engine room of one's career choices and it provides stability in one's career: if one deviates from what one enjoys and does well, the

anchor pulls one back. An individual will have one dominant anchor in their career lifespan (Schein, 1978; 1996). On the other hand, employability is about a person being able to diversify and benefit from the unstable labour market characterised by flat organisational structures (Fugate *at al.,* 2004). It follows that there is a relationship between career anchors and employability. However, it appears that this relationship is contradictory, judging by the definitions of the two constructs. The question arises: in the turbulent labour market where one needs to be flexible in order to be employable, does the career anchor not seem to hinder employability?

From the study of relevant literature, it appears that these two constructs positively influence each other. It is necessary to gain and maintain employment and to be active in the labour market in order to develop a career anchor, which only develops with workplace experience (Fugate *at al.,* 2004; Schein, 1978; Van der Heijde & Van der Heijden, 2006). It is also clear that knowing one's dominant career anchor does not hinder employability, but it assists an individual to make better internal career choices in the midst of external chaos. Schein (1978) clearly states that the career anchor develops from a process of exploration between an individual and the work environment; it develops as the individual gains self-knowledge through real life experiences in the workplace. Theories of employability also believe that through work experience, a person gains informal knowledge that could not be taught in theory. One discovers qualities such as resilience, openness to change, leadership and the like as one grows and develops in the workplace. Thus, experience also enhances employability (Beukes, 2010; Fugate & Kinicki, 2008). Development of a career anchor is a self-diagnostic process that leads to a clearer career identity (Ellison & Schreuder, 2000; Schein, 1978, 1996). Having a clear career identity enhances employability since it makes it possible to develop clear career goals for the future that can be beneficial in times of unforeseen changes in one's employment status (Beukes, 2010). Self-insight also builds confidence, which is necessary in times of presenting oneself and negotiating one's worth at an interview (Beukes, 2010).

The lack of clarity in Schein's (1978) theory in relation to multiple anchors that can form an individual's career preferences, opens up another debate. It can be argued that individuals who have multiple career anchors would be more flexible because

they would have a range of occupations to choose from and thus be more employable.

Therefore, one could argue that employability opens up opportunities for an individual to gain work experience, whilst in the process developing a career anchor. Having a dominant career anchor, on the other hand, also enhances individuals' employability and enables them to have control of their careers and to enjoy satisfying careers even in uncertain conditions (Ellison & Schreuder, 2000; Schein, 1996).

2.5. VARIABLES INFLUENCING CAREER ANCHORS AND EMPLOYABILITY

When determining the possible relationships that exist between career anchors and employability in this study, the personal characteristics of age, gender and racial groups were taken into account.

2.5.1. Gender

A study by Afrassa (2001) found that gender had a significant effect on employability, where males were more likely to gain employment than females after graduation (Beukes, 2010). The Statics South Africa report in quarter 1 of 2013 reported that the unemployment rate for women was 27.1% in quarter 1 of 2008, while the rate for men was 6.6 percentage points lower at 20.5%. By quarter 1 of 2013, this gap had narrowed to 4.1 percentage points women at 27.5 and men at 23.4. The unemployment rate for women remained higher than the national average between quarter 1 of 2008 and quarter 1 of 2013. This clearly supports these research findings of Afrassa (2001) and Beukes, 2010. Gender has also been found to influence individuals' career anchors. Females have anchors such as lifestyle and service dedication, whereas anchors such as entrepreneurial, pure challenge and managerial competence are found in men.

2.5.2. Age

Research by Van Rooy, Alonso and Viswesvaran (2005) shows that many older employees are now appearing in the role of job applicants due to restructuring in the business world. There appears to be a negative relationship between age and employability. According to De Armond, Tye, Chen, Krauss, Rogers and Sintek

(2006), older workers tend to be seen as less likely to seek new challenges, less flexible, having less need for variation in their work, and displaying less desire to learn new skills. These commonly held stereotypes have obvious negative effects on the employability of older workers when seeking new employment. On the other hand, new employment entrants are discriminated against on the basis of their age. This perception is based on graduates' lack of practical experience when applying for new positions (Beukes, 2010). There is an increasing acceptance that many students entering the labour market for the first time are ill equipped for the demands of the modern labour market and possesses limited skills, while firms increasingly demand high-skilled workers (IOL,2003). This claim is substantiated by the statistical figures reported n the third quarter of 2012 report, that 71% of the 25.2 % total unemployment rate of the South African working population are persons between the ages 25-34.

Age also influences career anchor development. Considering that career anchors develop over time with experience, career anchors may prove to have greater value to older individuals rather than to younger individuals who are just starting out in their careers. It is also possible that as age increases, career anchors become clearer and embedded in one's identity, thus eliminating other variables that impinge upon the choice process (Tladinyane, 2006).

2.5.3. Racial groups

In a study conducted by Rothwell *et al.* (2009), no significant differences in self-perceived employability scores were attributable to racial differences. Mancinelli, Massimiliano, Piva and Ponti (2010) found that higher education levels have a positive impact on the advancement of minorities, increasing their likelihood of jobs that are more satisfying, with higher incomes and career prospects. While findings suggest that employability does not differ among racial groups, in South Africa macro-economic policy issues such as black economic empowerment (BEE) certainly influence racial demand in industry and thus stimulate racial differences in employability (Beukes, 2009). While South African organisations are focusing on implementing BEE policy, to address the inequality caused by the apartheid regime, statistics still show alarming figures in terms of the employment by population groups in South Africa. The Statics South Africa in the first quarter of 2013 reported the

following unemployment percentages by population group; African: 28.8%; Coloured: 23.3%; Asian/Indian: 12.3% and White:7.2%. It makes sense that in the South African context the non-whites (African, Indian, Coloured) populations will remain more employable for some years to come to close the gap. Thus, in the South African context, it can be said that race has an influence on the employability of individuals.

In terms of career anchors, Tladinyane (2006) found that race differences in performance might be attributed to the organisational experiences of blacks and whites. Blacks in managerial positions perceived less autonomy than whites in similar positions.

2.6. IMPLICATIONS FOR EARLY-LIFE CAREER WORKERS IN TERMS OF CAREER ANCHORS AND EMPLOYABILITY

Due to the changes that have taken place in the labour market, rendering it fast-paced and uncertain, the psychological contract between the employer and employee has changed (Coetzee, 2006; Ellison & Schreuder, 2000; Schein, 1996; Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011). Traditionally, loyalty between both parties was at the centre of the psychological contract: the organisation tacitly promised to offer lifetime employment and security and the employee promised to offer their services to the best of their ability and promised support of organisational values (Schein, 1978; 1980; 1996). Nowadays, the psychological contract has diminished. Globalisation has introduced the concepts of mergers, downsizing and all kinds of continuous restructuring, so organisations can no longer promise lifelong employment and security while individuals, on the other hand, cannot promise unwavering commitment to the organisation (Arthur *et al.,* 2005).

In a labour market that is characterised by a lack of loyalty, survival of the fittest has become the order of the day. Individuals have taken it upon themselves to manage their own careers (Arthur et al., 2005). Individuals are investing in enhancing their levels of employability through further education and training, seizing every opportunity of learning in the workplace (Arthur et al., 2005; Arthur, 1994). Individuals have come to learn the necessity of self-awareness, thus taking it upon themselves to seek career guidance so that they are aware of their abilities, skills,

values and attitudes and know how and where to use them (Arthur et al., 2005; Arthur, 1994). Currently, knowing one's career anchors and enhancing one's employability open up opportunities for employment, enable individuals to be stable in their chosen careers and allow them to lead and enjoy successful careers even in this chaotic labour market. It facilitates career decision making, because the anchor enables one to make the right choice even if faced with scarcity or a wide range of choices. For instance, one may decide to stay in one's current job if the available opportunity is not congruent with one's anchor; or an individual may be able to choose the right offer from many offers on the table).

For organisations and individuals to benefit from the new psychological contract, where everyone is looking for maximum gain, organisations should embrace the new kind of employee that has emerged and accommodate them instead of trying to develop retention strategies. To reap rewards of highly employable individuals, organisations should serve as a learning environment by encouraging continuous development and supporting individuals in their career paths. They should invest in career guidance that will benefit employees as well as the organisation. The resultant awareness of employees' skills, needs, values and interests will enable companies to place individuals in suitable positions and consequently to reap high performance standards for the organisation.

2.7.   CHAPTER SUMMARY

Chapter 2 has focused on answering the theoretical questions of the study and this was achieved through a thorough literature review. This has concluded phase one of the study. Chapter 3 introduces the empirical phase of the research project.

CHAPTER 3 ARTICLE:
THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CAREER ANCHORS AND EMPLOYABILITY

ABSTRACT

Orientation: Due to the fast-paced labour market of the 21st century, there is a need to focus on the factors that influence the internal career, in order for individuals and organisations to be effectively armed to manage careers.

Purpose: The objectives of the study were to: (1) investigate the relationship between career anchors and employability as it manifests within early-life workers in a South Africa company; (2) determine whether individuals from different gender, age, and racial groups differ significantly concerning their perception of career anchors and their level of employability; and (3) to provide recommendations for the practice of Industrial and Organisational Psychology and career guidance and to suggest further research strategies based on the findings of the research.

Rationale for the study: In the current post-industrial society, career management has become of the utmost importance to help workers be employable. The effort of researching these concepts is geared towards adding to the knowledge base in the field of Industrial and Organisational Psychology , so that the current organisation from which the sample was chosen and other organisations in South Africa can adopt a strong career management culture.

Research design: A quantitative survey using primary data was conducted on a convenience sample (N=108) of full-time employees at a South African financial company. Data was gathered with the use of the Career Anchors Inventory (COI) and the Employability Attribute Scale (EAS).

Main results: The study found a statistically significant positive relationship between career anchors and employability. Significant correlations were found between the sub-constructs of career anchors and employability. Significant differences in career anchor preferences and employability perceptions were detected between males and females, while differences in career anchor preferences emerged between racial and age groups. The results indicate a mutual and positive relationship between career anchors and employability, which can be useful in career guidance in the 21st century.

Practical implications: The research will lead to increased self-awareness, which will enable individuals to be better able to manage their own careers effectively. Organisations will also benefit through an awareness that career management is essential in order to retain high-potential staff in this highly competitive labour market and that such programmes should be flexible to suit the needs of different employees.

Contribution/value of the study: The findings contribute valuable knowledge to the field of Industrial and Organisational Psychology in the South African context. It provides fertile ground for future research to delve deeper into the mutually beneficial relationship found between career anchors and employability.

Keywords: Careers, Career identity, Early-life career stage

3.1   INTRODUCTION

The following section presents the focus and the background of the study. It highlights trends found in the literature review and outlines the value that could be added by this study.

3.1.1 Key focus of the study

Despite all the advantages that globalisation has brought about, the labour market has become very fast-paced and extremely competitive. As much as this may be good for businesses, this change has brought about uncertainty in the careers of many. The ultimate goal of organisations is to make profits and minimise expenses. As the core product in the economy of the 21st century is knowledge/information, organisations have taken advantage of the technological developments that have emerged as the result of a global market. This has left employees who believed in jobs for life, jobless; those who have just entered the labour market, unsure of their future; and those who are yet to join the labour market, even more despondent about future opportunities for work. In recent years, research studies in the field of Career Psychology have focused on the notion of internal careers in order to shift the focus and control to the individual rather than the economy and organisations. This article explores how career anchors relate to employability and how these can assist

individuals to develop their self-concept and remain employable and in control of their own careers in this jobless labour market.

3.1.2. Background to the study

Since the emergence of the services-based sector in the late 20th century, there has been a corresponding decline in the manufacturing sector. The shift to a service producing labour sector with the aid of technology has prompted growth of flexible forms of employment. Work that needed people to perform is now being done efficiently by technology, resulting in a reduced need for human capital (Arthur *et al.*, 2005). Organisations have flattened their previously hierarchal structures to flatter structures, where growth is lateral rather than upward and the notion of boundary-less organisations and careers is becoming prevalent. Career success is no longer measured by how quickly one can climb the ladder, but it is now more about intrinsic satisfaction and growth (Arthur *et al.*, 2005, Brown & Lent, 2005).

Traditional ideas on employment that emphasised stability, hierarchy and clearly defined job positions for career progression have given way to alternative contemporary ideas that emphasise continuous adaptation of the organisation and careers to the rapidly changing environment (De Fillipi & Arthur, 1994). Despite all the changes that are taking place in employment trends, traditional kinds of employment have not been completely eroded. There are still people who prefer studying in one field and gaining experience in that field for life; complementarily, there are also employers who are not interested in diversifying but are comfortable in providing a specialised niche service to their clients (Baruch, 2004). These kinds of employment are found mainly in technical professions or specialist jobs (i.e. medical doctors, psychologists, lawyers, etc.).

3.1.3. Trends from the research literature

3.1.3.1. Career anchors

Edgar Schein (1975, 1987) developed the theory of career anchors (Coetzee, 1996). He defined career anchors as the evolution of a self-concept of what one is good at, and what one's needs and motives are in relation to work activities. An anchor develops after at least 5-10 years of work experience and it is the guiding force

behind career choices (Coetzee, 1996; Van Vuuren & Fourie, 2000; Cerdin & Le Pargneuex, 2010). Table 3.1 summarises the eight types of career anchors.

Table 3.1

Schein's (1957) career anchors

Career Anchor	Characteristics
Security/ Stability	Stable and predictable work
Autonomy/ Independence	Clearly defined goals
	Individual must find out on their own how to go about doing the task
Technical or Functional Competence	Content of the work is technical, requires expertise knowledge
General Management Competence	High levels of responsibility, driven by variety, enjoy integrating work, motivated by positions of leadership
Entrepreneurial Creativity	Highly innovative, establishment of new business, identifying business opportunities
Services/ Dedication to Cause	Improving society, serving and helping others in the community
Pure Challenge	Seek perpetual challenge regardless the field of work
Lifestyle	Flexible working hours, integration of work and family life

(Coetzee, 1996)

It has been established that in the volatile labour market of the 21st century the external career is bound to take different shapes and forms and one may be forced to take decisions that have not been carefully considered (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011; Tladinyane, 2006). For individuals to make correct choices under these conditions, it is imperative that they have a deeper sense of career identity and self-awareness. It is in the process of career development where one develops one's anchor and the career anchor enables the careerist to make the right choices.

Career anchors thus lead to a deeper self-awareness and a clear career identity (Ellison & Schreuder, 2000).

3.1.3.2. Employability

Employability is defined as an individual's composite skills that can include academic qualifications, personality attributes, previous experiences, achievements, and career management skills that would render that individual employable in various areas (Butcher, 2008; Bridgestock, 2009; Kruss 2004). In the volatile labour market of the 21st-century world of work, employability is the key, as it enables individuals to be flexible and adapt to change (Coetzee, 2006).

Employability is a multidimensional concept, because there are various factors that contribute to a person's employability (Clarke, 2008; Fugate, Kinicki & Ashforth, 2004). Table 3.2 depicts these factors.

Table 3.2

Factors influencing employability

Skills and abilities	Attitudes and behaviours	Individual characteristics	Labour market
Collecting,	Flexibility and adaptability.	Age,	Monitoring internal and external labour market
Analysing and organising ideas,	Career self management:	Gender,	Supply and demand
Working with people,	Self evaluation of strengths and weaknesses,	Ethnicity,	
Problem solving,	Networking and career planning,	Marital status and family responsibility,	
Planning and organising,	Updating skills to meet the demands of the labour market.	Health and wellness.	
Use of technology			

(Clarke, 2008)

3.1.3.3. Career

Hall (1976) defines the term career as a process that encompasses the work experience, educational background, personal interests and behaviours that influence the decisions a person makes regarding work throughout the lifespan. It has two aspects, namely the subjective career, consisting of the changes in interests, values, attitudes and sources of motivation as the individual matures; and the objective career, entailing the noticeable choices that a person makes, for instance changing jobs, deciding to study further or to change the field of study, etc. (Coetzee, 1996; Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011; Schreuder & Theron, 2001). Hall's (1976) definition is the contemporary career definition as it also takes into consideration the subjective side of careers. Traditional definitions only focused on the objective aspect of careers, which was all about the sequence and number of jobs an individual held in their lifetime (Coetzee; 2006).

3.1.3.4. Early-life career stage

The study focuses on early-life career stage, which includes individuals between the ages of 25 and 45 (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011). Energy and physical vigour are at their peak. Cognitive development and functioning are also optimal, being characterised by good memory, abstract thinking ability, problem solving ability, and learning new skills (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011; Hook *et al.*, 2002). The main life tasks of individuals in this stage includes achieving independence, establishing an identity, finding one's place as an adult in society and making a meaningful contribution. Young adults are also concerned with establishing themselves in family life and in meaningful occupations (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011; Hook *et al.*, 2002). There three phases of the early-life career stage, namely the novice, transitional and settling down phases (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011).

3.1.3.5. Models of career anchors and employability

    a   Models of career anchors

        i   Schein's model of career anchors

Schein (1978) proposed that career anchors are based on basic values, motives and needs. He identified eight career anchors, namely Autonomy/Independence;

Security/Stability; Technical-Functional Competence; General Managerial Competence; Entrepreneurial Creativity; Service or Dedication to a cause; Pure Challenge; and Lifestyle (Schein, 1996). Schein based his model on the attribute of congruence. He argued that when individuals achieve congruence between their career anchors and work environment, they are most likely to achieve positive career outcomes (Feldman & Bolino, 1996). Schein (1987, 1990) proposed that career outcomes include work effectiveness, specific job satisfaction (namely satisfaction with the type of work, pay and benefits promotion system and advancement opportunities), and job stability (Feldman & Bolino, 1996). Schein's model assumes that each individual has only one true career anchor. He argued that if no clear anchor emerges, it is because the individual has not had enough life experiences to develop priorities (Feldman & Bolino, 1996; Schein, 1990).

ii   Octagonal model of career anchors

Feldman and Bolino (1996) reviewed Schein's career anchor model in their theoretical and methodological paper, suggesting that Schein's work needed refining as it was underspecified theoretically and untested empirically. They proposed the octagonal model as an alternative (Chapman, 2009; Wils *et al.,* 2010). Feldman and Bolino (1996) grouped the career anchors according to their commonalities. They agreed with Schein (1990) that the anchors relate as follows: technical competence, managerial competence and entrepreneurial creativity anchors pertain to the work *talents* of individuals and centre on the work that an individual performs day by day. The security and stability, autonomy and independence and lifestyle anchors pertain to *motives and needs;* they centre on basic personal desires and personal lives. Lastly, the service dedication and pure challenge anchor represents *attitudes and values*, they represent the ways in which individuals identify with their occupations and with their organisational cultures (Wils *et al.,* 2010). Feldman and Bolino (1996) believed that an individual could have a dominant career anchor in each of these three categories, arguing that there is a primary and a secondary anchor, both of which are thus complementary. They were adamant that an individual could possess more than one anchor owing to personal ambivalence towards certain career choices or objectives.

iii   Circular value structural model of career anchors

Schwartz (1992) introduced the theory of the universality of value structure. Values are said to be universal because they depend on common requirements such as satisfaction of the needs of individuals as biological organisms, requisites of coordinating social interaction, and survival welfare (Wils *et al.,* 2010). Schwartz (1992) explained the dynamics of values on two levels. A circle is divided twice at right angles, making four quadrants. The horizontal axis place on opposite sides *openness to change* and *conservation* whereas the vertical axis contrasts *self-transcendence* and *self-enhancement.* The circle is further divided into 10 motivational domains, namely self-direction, stimulation, hedonism, achievement, power, security, conformity, tradition, benevolence and universalism (Wils *et al.,* 2010). Similar to the work of Feldman and Bolino (1996), the circular model illustrates relations in that two adjacent motivational domains correspond to compatibility whereas two diametrically opposed motivational domains illustrate conflict (Wils *et al.,* 2010). Schwartz (1992) linked the motivational domains and career anchors as follows; Self-direction: autonomy and independence and entrepreneurial creativity; Stimulation: pure challenge; Power: managerial competence; Security: security and stability and lifestyle; Benevolence: service and dedication; Achievement: technical competence.

From a study of the different models of career anchors, it is clear that the main criticism towards Schein's (1978) original career anchor model is his insistence on only one career anchor throughout an individual's career lifespan, whereas later research by others such as Feldman and Bolino (1996) has shown that there is a possibility of multiple career anchors. These researchers have supported their proposition with empirical evidence, and furthermore, Schein has produced no empirical evidence to refute the suggestion of multiple anchors. Whilst the possibility of multiple career anchors is seductive in the 21st century, the octagonal model falls short on providing sufficient empirical evidence on its proposition as it is based only on the study of Nordvik (1991) (Wils *et al.,* 2010). Whereas Schein's model is based on sound theoretical and empirical research, much approval is given to the work of Feldman and Bolino (1996). Schwartz (1992) and many others have challenged

Schein's work. However, this study will be based on Schein's model of career anchors as there are still numerous doors open for further research.

b. Models of employability

i   Dispositional approach to employability

Fugate *et al.* (2004) define employability as a psychosocial construct that constitutes individual characteristics to facilitate adaptive behaviours, which in turn affect and enhance individuals' work adaptability. Fugate and Kinicki (2008) define dispositional employability as "a latent multidimensional construct' (p.506). They suggest that dispositional employability is seen in those individuals who possess individual attributes that foster adaptive behaviours and positive employment outcomes, and it more accurately defines the action oriented, proactive and adaptive qualities that employers now emphasise. It facilitates seeking and identification of opportunities even before they become available to an individual, and enables the individual to identify personal changes needed for success (Fugate & Kinicki, 2008; Fugate *et al.*, 2004).Therefore, dispositional employability emphasises pro-active orientation toward adaptation. According to Fugate and Kinicki (2008), dispositional employability is constituted of openness to changes at work, work and career resilience, work and career pro-activity, career motivation, and work identity.

ii   Competence-based approach to employability

Van der Heijde and Van der Heijden (2006) argue that as developments enforced a reorganisation of the structure of work, and transition from a job-based HRM system to a competence-based person related HRM system, the concept of employability also changed from being job based to being competence based. They thus propose a competence-based approach to employability derived from an expansion of the resource-based view of organisations. According to this view, competencies make it possible for organisations to reach their performance goals and sustain their competiveness.

In the competence-based approach, employability is defined "as the continuous fulfilling, acquiring or creating of work through the optimal use of competences" (Van der Heijde & Van der Heijden, 2006, p.453). Competency on the other hand is defined as a set of observable performance dimensions including individual

characteristics such as knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviours that are linked to high performance and provide organisations with sustainable competitive advantage (Athey & Orth, 1999, as cited in Van der Heijde & Van der Heijden, 2006). The authors propose that the competence-based employability model comprises five competencies, namely occupational expertise, which is the core competency and is complemented by four general competences: anticipation and optimisation, personal flexibility, corporate sense, and balance (Van der Heijde & Van der Heijden, 2006).

iii.   Self-regulatory model of employability

Beukes (2009, p.9) defines employability "as the application and continuous development of a range of supportive competencies and attributes through a series of reiterative developmental stages that enhance the individual's opportunities for accessing and sustaining employment opportunities" (as cited in Beukes, 2010). He suggests that the individual is an active agent in developing and sustaining own employability. He thus proposes a self-regulatory approach to employability (Beukes, 2010). Due to the ever-changing work context, Beukes (2009) saw a need to look at employability through a career-oriented model aimed at guiding individuals in managing themselves through a process of continuous learning and re-integration. Whilst this model was developed for individuals in the school-to-work transition, it can be applied to any career life stage.

The self-regulatory model involves the following five sets of developmental stages: audit and alignment, career and goal clarity, formal and informal learning, self-presentation and competency trade-off. Each of these is supported by a set of competencies, such as basic skills (audit and alignment), goal driven behaviour (career goal clarity), creative learning skills (formal and informal learning), communication skills (self presentation) and business acumen (competency trade-off) (Beukes, 2010).

iv.   Bezuidenhout's employability attributes framework

Bezuidenhout (2010) with Coetzee (2010) developed an employability attributes framework with students in the South African higher education context in mind. The framework consists of eight core career-related employability attributes which are deemed important for increasing an individual's likelihood of securing and

maintaining employment opportunities, namely: Career self-management, Cultural competence, Self-efficacy, Career resilience, Sociability, Entrepreneurial orientation, Pro-activity, and Emotional literacy (Bezuidenhout, 2010; Coetzee, 2010).

Whereas the dispositional model and the competence-based model of employability add a wealth of relevant information to the understanding of the concept, the self-regulatory model may be more acceptable in the South African context, for which it was developed. It gives a clear process that individuals can follow in building up their employability regardless of where they are in their career. Each individual can adapt and personalise this cyclical process and start to see growth and development in their career. The basic competencies that underlie each stage are not technical competencies that are career specific and can only be attained via formal education, but basic competencies that can be learnt at any stage in one's career. The model is accommodating and flexible; applicable whether a person is in the school-to-work transition, career re-entry or even career development stage. It meets individuals at their point of need. I therefore found it suitable for this specific study. The Employability Attribute Scale (Bezuidenhout 2010, & Coetzee, 2010) was used to measure employability. It was deemed a suitable tool as it was developed with students in the South African higher education context in mind, yet can also be applied to individuals at any career stage. Whilst Bezuidenhout's (2010) model is developed for a South African workplace and has a great instrument to measure employability, I found Beukes's (2009) model more useful and easy to apply in the South African context, even though Bezuidenhout's (2010) EAS is more user friendly and can be applied to any model as it covers a wider range of employability attributes.

3.1.3.6 Theoretical integration: the relationship between career anchors and employability

From the review of the literature, it appears that these two constructs positively influence each other. As the career anchor only develops with workplace experience, it is necessary for an individual to gain and maintain employment, and to be active in the labour market in order to develop a career anchor (Fugate *at al.,* 2004; Schein, 1978; Van der Heijde & Van der Heijden, 2006). It has also become clear that

knowing a person's dominant career anchor does not hinder employability, but assists an individual to make better internal career choices in the midst of external chaos. Schein (1978) states clearly that the career anchor develops from a process of exploration between an individual and the work environment; it develops as the individual gains self-knowledge through real life experiences in the workplace. Theories of employability also imply that through work experience individuals gain informal knowledge that could not be taught in theory. Qualities such as resilience, openness to change, leadership and the like, are discovered as one grows and develops in the workplace. It follows that experience also enhances employability (Beukes, 2010; Fugate & Kinicki, 2008). The development of a career anchor is a self-diagnosis process that leads to a clearer career identity (Ellison & Schreuder, 2000; Schein, 1978, 1996). Having a clear career identity also enhances employability: it makes it possible to develop clear career goals for the future, which can be beneficial in times of unforeseen changes in one's employment status (Beukes, 2010). Furthermore, self-insight builds confidence, which is necessary in times of presenting oneself and negotiating one's worth at an interview (Beukes, 2010).

3.1.4. Research objectives

The objectives of the study were to:

1. investigate the relationship between career anchors and employability as it manifests itself within early-life workers in a South African company;
2. determine whether individuals from different gender, age, and racial groups differ significantly with regard to their perception of career anchors and their level of employability; and
3. provide recommendations for the practice of Industrial and Organisational Psychology and career guidance and to suggest further research strategies based on the findings of the research.

3.1.5. The potential value-add of the study

A goal of the current study was to steer readers towards an increased understanding of the theory and manifestation of career anchors and the factors influencing employability. This is likely to lead to increased self-awareness, which will enable

individuals to be better able to manage their own careers effectively. Organisations will also benefit, becoming aware that career management is essential in order to retain high-potential staff in this highly competitive labour market and that the programmes should be flexible to suit the needs of different employees.

3.1.6. What will follow

The following section will focus on the research design, outlining the research approach and method applied. The results will then be presented, followed by a concise discussion, highlighting the significant findings of the research in relation to previous studies. Conclusions will be drawn and presented, limitations that have been encountered will be identified, and recommendations for future research will be offered.

3.2. RESEARCH DESIGN

3.2.1. Research approach

This study was explorative in nature; the aim was to discover relations between two constructs and the extent of the relationship rather than determining cause and effect. Quantitative methods were used to explore the nature and strength of the relationship. Quantitative methods would allow for broader generalisation of the results as the information gathered was interpreted and translated to statistics that enabled the researcher to make scientifically valid generalisations about the phenomena studied (Terre Blanche *et.al.,* 2006; Mouton & Marais, 1990).

3.2.2 Research method

The following section is a discussion of the techniques and procedures used to conduct the empirical study.

3.2.3. Determination and description of the sample

A single large organisation in the financial industry in Johannesburg, South Africa, was chosen from which to draw the sample. The sample included employees between the ages of 25 and 45, regardless of their department, position and power, because a diverse group was preferable. The reasoning behind this was Schein's (1957) assumption that career anchors take shape after 5 to 10 years of work

experience. In terms of employability, the aim of the researcher was to focus on individuals who had done various things to increase their employability. Thus, it was relevant to study adult careers, as it is typical of them to have well developed career preferences (Coetzee, 1996). The sample included 108 participants.

Non-probability sampling was used because it is cheaper, less time consuming and convenient for student researchers. Convenience sampling was used, meaning that the sample included those people who were willing to participate; however, they were chosen from a representative population (Terre Blanche *et.al.,* 2006).

The sample choice was based on the following considerations (Coetzee, 1996):

- The sample size was determined by time and financial constraints on the part of the researcher.

- The response rate is normally 60%; thus in selecting 180 therefore, it was envisaged that 100-110 questionnaires would be returned.

The organisation chosen for this study is in the financial industry in Johannesburg where the researcher is an employee.

3.2.3.1. Composition of the sample

The following tables represent the composition of the sample.

Table 3.3

Biographical profile of the sample – individual characteristics

CATEGORY	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGES %
GENDER		
Male	36	33.3
Female	72	66.7
TOTAL	**108**	**100**
AGE GROUP		
25	23	21.3
26-40	76	70.4
40-45	9	8.3
TOTAL	**108**	**100**
RACIAL GROUP		
African	53	49.1
Coloured	11	10.2
Indian	21	19.4

Table 3.3

Biographical profile of the sample – individual characteristics

CATEGORY	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGES %
White	23	21.3
TOTAL	**108**	**100**
MARITAL STATUS		
Single	60	55.6
Married	41	35.0
Widowed	2	1.9
Divorced	5	4.6
TOTAL	**108**	**100**

Table 3.3 depicts the individual characteristics of the biographical profile of the sample. The sample is dominated by females and most of the respondents are between the ages 26-40, while 55.6 are single. Africans make up the largest number in terms of racial groups.

Table 3.4

Biographical profile of the sample – organisational characteristics

CATEGORY	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGES (%)
JOB LEVEL		
Senior Management	3	2.8
Middle Management	17	15.7
First level Supervision	14	13.0
Staff	74	68.65
TOTAL	**108**	**100**

Table 3.4 shows the organisational characteristics of the sample. From this table it is evident that most of the respondents are normal staff members, with the lowest number in senior management.

3.2.4. Measuring instruments

The measuring tools that were used were guided by the literature review in terms of the construct being studied. The tools were chosen according to the relevant theories regarding career anchors and employability.

3.2.4.1. Career Orientations Inventory (COI)

The Career Orientations Inventory (COI) is a self-diagnosing questionnaire developed by Schein (1974) and later revised by Schein (1990). The aim of the instrument is to measure the eight career anchors of individuals. The COI (Schein, 1990) consists of a set of 40 items, all of which are considered to be of equal value and to which respondents respond in terms of how true the statement is. The sub-scale used is a summated rating in the form of a six-point Likert type scale. The aim of the instrument is to measure the eight career anchors of individuals who are primarily grouped into three dimensions, being *talent-based* (technical/functional, managerial, and entrepreneurial creativity competence), *need-based* (security and stability, autonomy and independence, and lifestyle competence) and *value-based* (dedication to a cause and pure challenge competence) (Schein, 1990; Coetzee & Schreuder, 2009)

The COI is a pre-tested instrument with high internal validity and reliability (Van Vuuren & Fourie; 200). For the purposes of the current study, the level of validity is considered adequate as the instrument was used to predict broad trends rather than individual differences. The validity of the COI for the South African context was proved to be adequate after factor analysis on COI by done by Boshof, Bennet & Kellerman (2004) produced the same results as reported by Slabbert (1987) (as cited in Coetzee & Schreuder, 2009). Internal consistency (coefficient alpha) ranges from 0.59 to 0.78 in a sample of 295. Scores for technical/functional competence (0.59), general management (0.71), autonomy (0.75), security (0.78), entrepreneurship (0.75), service (0.73), pure challenge (0.70), and lifestyle (0.64) are considered moderately high, with the exception of the technical/functional competence and lifestyle (Ellison & Schreuder, 2000). According to Terre Blanche and Durrheim (2006), it is acceptable for alpha coefficients to be as low as 0.30 for broad group measures. The COI (Schein, 1990) was utilised in this study because of the psychometric properties of the instrument, which make it a valid and reliable measure of career orientation preferences.

3.2.4.2. Employability Attribute Scale (EAS)

The EAS (Bezuidenhout, 2010; Coetzee, 2010) has been developed for the South African context. The EAS (Bezuidenhout, 2010; Coetzee, 2010) is used as an instrument to measure individuals' level of confidence in their self-perceived employability attributes. The purpose of the EAS (Bezuidenhout, 2010; Coetzee, 2010) is to assess the generic transferable attributes that a person needs in order to be employable in the context of the new world of work. Individuals are measured on eight employability attributes, including: Career self-management (11 items), Cultural competence (5 items), Career resilience (6 items), Proactivity (7 items), Entrepreneurial orientation (7 items), Sociability (7 items), Self-efficacy (6 items) , Emotional literacy (7 items)

The Kaiser- Meyer- Olkin test of sampling adequacy; Bartlett's test of sphericity and inter-item correlational analyses provided evidence that the EAS items meet the psychometric criteria of construct validity. In terms of reliability (internal-consistency), Cronbach's Alpha coefficients for each subscale range between .78 and .90 (high) (Coetzee, 2010).

The EAS (Bezuidenhout, 2010; Coetzee, 2010) was utilised in this study because it is a South African measure, and was developed through consideration of the diverse cultural groupings of South Africa.

3.2.5. Data collection methods

The quantitative approach was followed to collect the data. In addition, survey methodology was employed. The survey was cross-sectional, as data was collected at one point and time (Cresswell, 2009). The survey could be self-administered; however, the questionnaires were manually distributed to 180 participants. This was done to encourage the participants and maintain and enhance the relationship between them and the researcher. An informed consent form was attached for the participants to sign and return for record keeping and for meeting ethical requirements. Thereafter, group sessions were held to assist the research participants in completing the questionnaires. The informed consent forms were also completed in these sessions. Informed consent to collect data was also obtained from the participating organisation and the supervising academic institution.

3.2.5.1 Ethical Considerations

Ethics are the engine room of the preservation of psychological practices. Researchers are often faced with the ethical dilemma of two or more principles that are in direct contrast with one another and have to make a choice (Burke, Harper, Rudnick & Kruger, 2007; Joiner, 2000). It is inevitable in any scientific research, especially in the field of Human Sciences, that the research will involve administering of psychological assessments and such services are classified as psychological acts (Health Professions Act 56 of 1974). These are some of ethical issues I had to consider in the research process (Health Professions Act 56 of 1974):

- Informed consent – I had to ensure that my participants consent to being subjects of study in the research process. Even though participants volunteered to participate in the research, good ethics still demanded ensuring consent. Therefore, prior to commencing with the study, I gave the participants an informed consent form to sign and return for record keeping.

- Confidentiality is another ethical issue I had to consider. In the informed consent letter, participants were assured that the information provided would be handled with confidentiality and only the researcher and the lecturer marking the assignment would have access to the information. To ensure even further confidentiality, no names were requested on the questionnaires.

- In all research, the ethical code emphasises the importance of giving feedback. Such feedback can be given on an individual basis with the candidates on their own results from the questionnaires completed, if the sample is small; or it can be in the form of a group briefing regarding the findings and implications of the study for them or their immediate community.

- Avoiding harm during the research, I had to be careful at all times to avoid subjecting the participants to unnecessary physical or mental discomfort. I also had to consider the lasting impact of my actions or things I said.

The kinds of ethical dilemmas faced in this field are not limited to those listed above. Burke *et al.* (2007) emphasise that ethics are a complex issue; they cannot be reduced to what is provided in the ethical code. Thus researchers have to be adequately trained to deal with ethical dilemmas even if they are not provided for in

the code. They suggest that psychologists and other professions using assessments should cultivate an ethical character, which means developing to an extent that one is willing to assess one's own values and ethical convictions.

3.2.6. Data analysis

The Social Package for Social Sciences (SPSS, 2011) was used to analyse the data. The statistical analysis involved computing descriptive statistics, correlations between the constructs career anchors and employability and Cronbach's alpha coefficients.

The descriptive statistics used were frequencies, means and standard deviations. The scores were created by obtaining a mean across all the items in each of the factors. Using the means scores, instead of total scores, it is possible to obtain a better comparison between the different dimensions. Frequency tables were used to indicate the distribution of biographical variable data and enable the researcher to describe the sample population. In this study, the mean is used as a measure of central tendency. The standard deviation approximates the average distance of the individual scores from the mean. The higher the standard deviation, the greater the distances are on average from the mean (Gravetter & Wallnau, 2007).

The sampling adequacy of the Career Anchor Inventory (COI) and the Employability Attribute Scale (EAS) was tested by conducting a diagnostic test, the Kaiser-Meyer-Oklin measure of sampling adequacy, and Bartlett's test of sphericity.

Cronbach's alpha coefficients were used in order to assess the internal consistency reliability of the questionnaire sub-scales (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) indicate that this index is indicative of the extent to which all items in the scales are measuring the same characteristics. High internal consistency implies a high generalisability of items in the test, as well as items in parallel.

Inter-item correlation coefficients were used to ensure that the internal consistency of measuring instruments is not so high that it affects validity (Mitchell & Jolley, 2010). An inter-item correlation ranging between 0.15 and 0.50 is acceptable (Clark & Watson, 1995). In this particular study, the product-moment correlation (r) was used to determine the relationship between variables. Low and near-zero values are

indicative of a weak relationship, while those nearest to +1 or -1 suggest a stronger one (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) suggest that researchers need to increase their effort to interpret results according to effect sizes and practical significance, rather than statistical significance. In this study, r≥ 0.10 – 0.029 (small effect), r≥ 0.30- 0.49 (medium effect), and r≥ 0.50 (large effect) were considered to be practically significant.

Multiple comparisons were used to calculate the significant differences between the constructs, using the one-way-Manova. The Wilks Lambda is used to calculate the extent of differences between more than two variables. In this study, it was used to calculate differences between racial groups and age groups; and the Hotellings Trace was used to calculate the extent of differences between two groups. With this test, differences between genders were calculated. Post-hoc tests, namely Scheffe's test, were conducted where significant differences were found.

3.2.7. Hypotheses

This study proposes that there is a statistically significant and positive relationship between career anchors and employability.

H1: There are statistically significant positive correlations between sub-constructs of career anchors and employability.

H2: Males and females differ significantly concerning their perceptions of career anchors and their level of employability.

H3: Individuals from different age groups differ significantly about their perception of career anchors and their level of employability.

H4: Individuals from different racial groups differ significantly concerning their perception of career anchors and their level of employability.

3.3.   RESULTS

This section presents the findings of the study. Tables and/or figures are used to present the data.

3.3.1. Descriptive statistics

3.3.1.1. Means and standard deviation

The means and standard deviations of the two constructs are presented in table 3.5

Table 3.5

Mean and standard deviation

Instrument	Mean	SD
EAS	4.62	41.24
COI	4.13	29.19
EAS Sub-Constructs	**Mean**	**SD**
Career self-management	4.78	.83
Cultural competence	4.48	.95
Personal disposition: Internal locus of control	4.71	.85
Personal disposition: Career resilience	4.53	.85
Personal disposition: Sociability	4.36	.83
Personal disposition: Entrepreneurial orientation	4.75	.82
Personal disposition: Pro-activity	4.66	.78
Personal disposition: Emotional literacy	4.49	.93
COI Sub-Constructs	**Mean**	**SD**
Technical functional	4.42	.88
General management	3.50	.98
Entrepreneurial creativity	3.98	1.13
Autonomy Independence	3.84	.99
Security stability	4.26	.98
Lifestyle	4.30	.92
Service dedication to a cause	4.37	.84
Pure challenge	4.44	.98

below. The table shows that the participants obtained average mean scores, with employability being the highest *(M=4.62; SD= 41.24)*.

The mean scores for the EAS ranged from 4.36 to 4.78. The sample of participants obtained the highest mean scores on *career self-management* (m=4.78; SD= .83) followed by *entrepreneurial orientation* (m=4.75; SD= .82). The lowest is on *Sociability (*m=4.36; SD=.83*).* The standard deviations of the sub-scales are fairly similar, all ranging from 0.78 to 0.93.

The high scores obtained for the career self-management variable suggests that participants perceive themselves as having the ability to recognise skills needed to be successful in one's career and knowing how to go about up-skilling themselves to achieve career goals. Concerning entrepreneurial orientation, participants perceive themselves to be interested in undertaking new business opportunities, being open to change and knowing what it takes to be successful in business. The low score obtained for sociability suggests that most of the participants care less for building a social network of friends who could assist in advancing them, or using their social networks in order to search and find new job opportunities.

The mean scores for the COI ranged from 3.50 to 4.44. The sample of participants obtained the highest mean scores on *pure challenge* (m=4.44; SD= .98) followed by *Technical functional* (m=4.42; SD= .88). The lowest is on *general management (*m=3.50; SD=.98*).* The standard deviations of the sub-scales are ranging from 0.84 to 1.13.

The high score obtained on pure challenge suggests that the participants are highly motivated and that they thrive in challenging environments. They also enjoy work environments where they will use their technical expertise and they seek growth in their chosen career tract, as the technical functional anchor is the second highest. The lowest score, being general management, suggests that the participants do not enjoy managing the work of others and functioning in various aspects of management. This makes sense, as the one of the highest mean scores is technical functional.

3.3.1.2. Reliability and validity of the measuring instruments

a Career Orientations Inventory (COI)

Internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha) ranges from .64 - .80 in a sample of 108.

Table 3.6 below shows the reliability scores for the COI.

Table 3.6

Reliability of the COI

Sub-construct	Cronbach Alpha	Reliability
technical/functional competence	.64	Moderate
general management	.68	Moderate
autonomy	.70	High
security	.72	High
entrepreneurship	.79	High
service	.68	Moderate
pure challenge	.80	Very high
lifestyle	.70	High

*Career Orientations Inventory

Table 3.7

KMO and Bartlett's test-COI

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.75
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	2569.22
	df	780
	Sig.	.00

*Career Orientations Inventory Table 3.7 shows the sampling adequacy results of the COI. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure for adequacy was .74, indicating that the sample was adequate. The Bartlett test of sphericity yielded a statistical approximate chi-square ($p<0.000$), which also indicated the probability that the correlation matrix had significant correlation amongst the variables.

b Employability Attribute Scale (EAS)

The reliability of the EAS was determined by means of Cronbach-alpha coefficient. Scores for each sub-construct are reported in Table 3.8 as follows:

Table 3.8

Reliability of the EAS

Sub-construct	Cronbach Alpha	Reliability
career self-management	.9	Very high
cultural competence	.88	Very high
personal disposition: internal locus of control	.82	Very high
personal disposition: career resilience	.78	High
personal disposition: sociability	.74	High
personal disposition entrepreneurial orientation	.83	Very High
personal disposition: pro-activity	.82	Very High
personal disposition: emotional literacy	.89	Very High

*EAS- Employability Attribute Scale

Table 3.9

KMO and Bartlett's test - EAS

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.78
	Approx. Chi-Square	5710.07
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	df	1540
	Sig.	.00

*EAS-Employability Attribute Scale

For the EAS, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy and the Bartlett test of sphericity were conducted. Table 3.9 depicts the KMO measure for adequacy which was 0.78, indicating that the sample was adequate. The Bartlett test of sphericity yielded a statistical approximate chi-square ($p<0.000$), which also indicated the probability that the correlation matrix had significant correlation amongst the variables.

3.3.2. Correlations between career anchors and employability

Table 3.10 shows that the variables career anchors and employability correlate positively (r=.59; p<_ .01; large practical effect).

Table 3.10

Inter-correlations between career anchors and employability

		EAS	COI
ES	Pearson Correlation	1	.59[**]
	Sig (2-tailed		.00
	N	108	108
COI	Pearson Correlation	.59[**]	1
	Sig (2-tailed	.00	
	N	108	108

** Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed).

*EAS-Employability Attribute Scale

*COI-Career Orientations Inventory

Based on the results shown in this table, there is sufficient evidence to support the main hypothesis of this study (*There is a statistically significant relationship between career anchors and employability*) is accepted.

Table 3.11 shows the relationships between the eight sub-constructs of career anchors and employability. Positive relationships can be seen across the constructs. Strong relationships can be seen in those that yielded (.50; p< .01; large practical effect size), medium strength is reported in those that yielded (.30-40; p< .01; medium practical effect size), and weak strength were those that are (.15 below .30 and showed no significant difference). The strongest relationship is seen between personal disposition: pro-activity and service dedication (.56; p<.01; large practical effect size); and the weakest relationship and which is not significant, is seen between cultural competence and security and stability (.15).

Table 3.11

Inter-correlations between the sub-constructs of career anchors and employability

Variables		TF	GM	EC	AI	SEC	LIF	SD	PC
Career self management	Pearson Correlation	.39**	.38**	.41**	.21*	.38**	.29**	.52**	.49**
Cultural competence	Pearson Correlation	.18	.43**	.38**	.29**	.15	.18	.39**	.32**
Personal disposition: Internal locus of control	Pearson Correlation	.47**	.48**	.55**	.43**	.36**	.41**	.55**	.52**
Personal disposition: Career resilience	Pearson Correlation	.39**	.44**	.46**	.33**	.21*	.29**	.51**	.39**
Personal disposition: Sociability	Pearson Correlation	.37**	.42**	.46**	.32**	.21*	.31**	.46**	.37**
Personal disposition: Entrepreneurial orientation	Pearson Correlation	.43**	.45**	.53**	.33**	.25**	.35**	.54**	.52**
Personal disposition: Proactivity	Pearson Correlation	.43**	.42**	.49**	.29**	.27**	.32**	.56**	.47**
Personal disposition: Emotional literacy	Pearson Correlation	.39**	.39**	.32**	.26**	.27**	.29**	.47**	.39**

**. Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed).

*. Correlation is significant at the .05 level (2-tailed).

Based on the results displayed in Table 3.11, supportive evidence of H1 (There is a statistically significant relationship between sub-constructs of career anchors and employability) is provided.

3.3.3. Multivariate Tests - One- way- Manova

3.3.3.1. Gender

Table 3.12 shows that there is a statistically significant difference between males and females in their perceptions of career anchors and their level of employability. Both variables are significant at 0.05 levels of significance.

Table 3.12

Hottelling's Trace Test: significant mean differences in gender (COI and EAS)

Variables	Effect	P - Value
COI	Hotteling's Trace	.007**
EAS		.047**

*** p ≤ 0.001 ** p ≤ 0.01 * p ≤ 0.05 (two – tailed)

*EAS-Employability Attribute Scale

* COI-Career Orientations Inventory

The results displayed in Table 3.12, provide supportive evidence to H2: (Individuals from different gender groups differ significantly concerning their perception of career anchors and their level of employability).

3.3.3.2. Age

Table 3.13 shows a statistically significant difference in perceptions of career anchors between different age groups. However, there is no statistically significant difference in perception of employability between the different age groups.

Table 3.13

Wilks Lambda Test: significant mean differences in age (COI and EAS)

Variables	Effect	P - Value
COI	Wilks Lambda	.024*
EAS		.128

*** p ≤ 0.001 ** p ≤ 0.01 * p ≤ 0.05 (two – tailed)

*EAS-Employability Attribute Scale

* COI-Career Orientations Inventory

After a significant difference in perceptions of career anchors was found between different age groups, Sheffe's post-hoc test was applied to see where exactly the differences were. Table 3.13 shows where the significant differences were found, namely in mean of age group 25 and younger and age group 26-40.

Table 3.14

Scheffe's Post-Hoc test on differences in age (COI)

Variables	Age (25 younger and 26-40)	
	P Value	**Mean Difference (25younger and 26-40)**
Technical Functional	.015	-3.00
Autonomy Independence	.039	-2.96
Lifestyle	.012	-3.23
Service dedication to a cause	.020	-2.78

*** p ≤ 0.001 ** p ≤ 0.01 * p ≤ 0.05 (two – tailed)

* COI-Career Orientations Inventory

The results displayed in table 3.14 provide partially supportive evidence to H3 (Individuals from different age groups differ significantly about their perception of career anchors and their level of employability).

3.3.3.3. Racial Groups

Table 3.15 shows that there is a statistically significant difference between individuals from different racial groups in their perceptions of career anchors; however, there is no statistically significant difference in perceptions of employability between different cultural groups.

Table 3.15

Wilks' Lambda Test: significant mean differences in racial groups (COI and EAS)

Variables	Effect	P - Value
COI	Wilks Lambda	.003**
EAS		.224

*** $p \leq 0.001$ ** $p \leq 0.01$ * $p \leq 0.05$ (two – tailed)

*EAS-Employability Attribute Scale

 * COI-Career Orientations Inventory

Sheffe's post-hoc test was applied on COI to see where exactly the differences were between the different racial groups. Table 3.16 shows where the significant differences were found, namely in mean of Indians, Africans, and whites.

Table 3.16

Scheffe's Post-Hoc test on differences in racial groups (COI)

Variables	Cultural Group I	Cultural Group J	P Value	Mean Difference
Entrepreneurial Creativity	Indian	African	.000	-6.45
Autonomy Independence	Indian	African	.024*	-3.86
Security/ Stability	African	White	.023*	3.74
Lifestyle	Indian	African	.057	-3.20
Service dedication to a cause	Indian	African	.012*	-3.55
Pure Challenge	African	White	.079	3.12

*** $p \leq 0.001$ ** $p \leq 0.01$ * $p \leq 0.05$ (two – tailed)

The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

* COI-Career Orientations Inventory

The results shown in Table 3.16, partially support H4 (Individuals from different racial groups differ significantly concerning their perception of career anchors and their level of employability).

Table 3.17

Summary of decision regarding the research proposition and hypotheses

	Proposition	Decision
	Proposition stated: There is a statistically positive and significant relationship between career anchors and employability	The results provide supportive evidence for the proposition.
	Hypotheses	
H1	There is a statistically significant relationship between perceived sub-constructs of career anchors and employability.	The results provide supportive evidence of this hypothesis.
H2	Males and females differ significantly concerning their perception of career anchors and their level of employability.	The results provide supportive evidence of this hypothesis.
H3	Individuals from different age groups differ significantly about their perception of career anchors and their level of employability.	The results provide partially supportive evidence of this hypothesis.
H4	Individuals from different racial groups differ significantly concerning their perception of career anchors and their level of employability.	The results provide partially supportive evidence of this hypothesis.

3.4. DISCUSSION

The objectives of the study were to: (1)investigate the relationship between career anchors and employability as it manifests within early-life workers in a South Africa company; (2)determine whether individuals from different gender, age, and racial groups differ significantly with regard to their perception of career anchors and their level of employability; and (3)provide recommendations for the practice of Industrial and Organisational Psychology and career guidance and to suggest further research strategies based on the findings of the research.

3.4.1. The empirical relationship between career anchors and employability

Earlier in the study, it was noted that it seems as though the definitions and purpose of the two concepts in this study, namely career anchors and employability, pull in opposite directions, yet they are both important in the theory of the internal career,

which is of interest to career psychology scholars. A career anchor is said to act as an engine room for career choices, and provides stability in careers because when people deviate from what they enjoy and do well, their anchor pulls them back (Kakabadse *et al.*, 2005). It is said that a person will have one dominant anchor. On the other hand, employability is about a person being able to diversify and benefit from the unstable labour market characterised by flat organisational structures (Bridgestock, 2009). The question that arises then is the following: what does a specific anchor say about a person's employability?

In this study, statistically significant and strong correlations were observed between career anchors and employability. This supports the hypothesis that there is a relationship between these two constructs. These empirical findings corroborate findings in the literature, namely that as career anchors develop over time and may develop due to various circumstances in response to or as a proactive measure to cope in a turbulent labour market, they enable careerists to have a solid hold on their careers. They enhance a deeper self-awareness and enable individuals to be confident in their abilities (Feldman & Bolino, 1996). As is evident from the self-regulatory employability model proposed by Beukes (2010), a dose of confidence brought about by self-awareness is needed in order to have a place and be employable in the current turbulent labour market. As much as these concepts may seem to differ, the impact they have in an individual's career is similar. Table 3.18 shows the similarities and differences between career anchors and employability.

Table 3.18

Similarities between career anchors and employability

Common characteristics	Career anchors	Employability
Enhance self-awareness	Through years of work experience an individual gains awareness of skill, interests and abilities.	An individual continuously does self-audits regarding their competencies in relation to labour demands and employment opportunities.
Develop career identity	Through concrete experiences with real tasks and real co-workers in a real work organisation	Through continuous opportunities of self-presentation to prospective employers, one develops a personal brand/ career identity, thereby opening more doors.
Guide choices about job changing	Individuals are guided by their anchors in choosing careers that will be congruent and thus satisfying.	Individuals continuously study the job market and align personal skills and competencies accordingly, and make job choices that will enhance their employability.
Source of stability	Knowing one's anchor not imply absolute rigidity and zero change, instead it implies some movement, however not random movement, but movement within a circumscribed area.	Being employable increases the chances of a stable career even in a jobless labour market.
Career goal clarity	The dominant anchor influences one's career track. Individuals are able to focus, move and grow within a specified career.	Individuals set clear and measurable career goals to meet the challenges of the labour market in order to remain employable.

Feldman and Bolino (1996) and other critics of Schein's (1990) model of career anchors argue that it is possible for an individual to have more than one career anchor. Feldman and Bolino (1996) posit that in the three groups of anchors, namely talent based, need based and motive based, one person can have an anchor from each of these groups. Schein (1996) himself, in his revision of career anchors, does not refute the assumption of multiple anchors. This view may be especially true in the 21st-century workplace, seeing that having multiple anchors may open doors into more than one avenue, thus enabling the individual to be more employable. Schein (1996) seems to agree with this view. He argues that the concept of career anchors

is still appropriate in today's turbulent world as more and more people are being laid off and having to re-think how to move forward. The understanding of career anchors has thus also shifted. Schein refers to the security/ stability anchor, and posits that whereas this may have been a good anchor in earlier days where careers were rigid and lifelong, in today's labour market a person with this anchor may have to develop new ways of thinking. Depending on the employer is no longer viable for career growth; self-reliance has now taken over. Individuals with this characteristic are employable in the uncertain world of work of the 21st century. One can assume that a person who has this trait as the dominant anchor may have to tap into the second and even third anchor in order to enhance his or her employability.

Beukes's (2010) self-regulatory employability model has a phase called audit and alignment, which is about an individual assessing their own competencies, skills and interests in relation to the labour market. He argues that if individuals have a clear understanding of what they are good at and where they can apply those competences, they are better able to formulate a career goal. One can argue that this kind of behaviour, which is encouraged in today's labour market, contributes to individuals evaluating their careers and discovering new likes, dislikes, talents, and motives. This may bring about a change in the career anchor to suit the current status in that individual's life and to boost employability.

It is clearer now that career anchors do not necessarily render careers rigid. Individuals can still change jobs and bend with the times whilst remaining in their chosen careers; however, their job choices silently influence their dominant anchors. It is also evident that career anchors and employability work hand in hand: career anchors have an impact on employability, just as the need or perceptions of employability may affect career anchors that emerge in an individual's career. In practice, one has to be able to get and maintain employment in order for the career anchor to develop. They both play a significant role in the development of a solid internal career. Figure 3.1 shows the nature of the relationship between career anchors and employability, and that these concepts both affect the internal career.
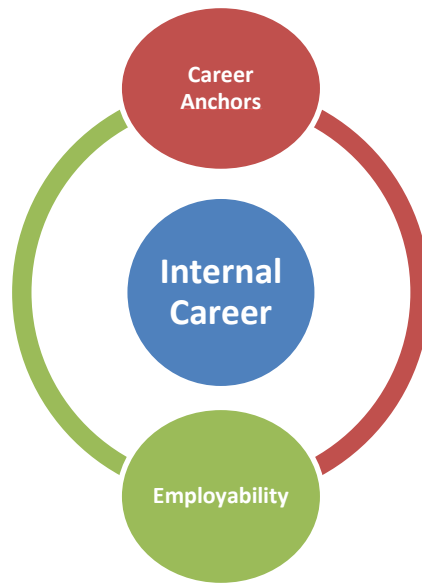
Figure 3.1: Empirical relationship between career anchors and employability

3.4.2. Relationship between the sub-constructs of career anchors and employability

When delving deeper into the relationship between career anchors and employability, it was necessary to study the underlying relationships between the sub-constructs of these concepts in order to have a clearer understanding of where this relationship is made strong. The results show that positive relationships can be seen between the constructs, some strong and others weaker.

The sub-constructs that had the strongest relationship are personal disposition: pro-activity (PD:P) under employability and service/dedication to a cause (SD) under career anchors. Personal disposition: pro-activity in the employability survey alludes to attributes such as being able to establish and maintain interpersonal relationships, taking responsibility for decisions, being able to adapt to changing circumstances in the career, and being able to persevere even in the face of difficult career circumstances (Coetzee, 2010). Service/dedication to a cause, on the other hand, is about the need to add personal value to the world in some manner, influencing the organization and society, and being of help to others (Schein, 1990). Just by reviewing what these dimensions mean, it is clear that there are similarities. In the empirical study, those who scored high on SD also scored high on PD:P. In practical life, dedicating oneself to a cause involves establishing relationships with others, whether you like to or not, as long as those people have a role to play in the cause. It

may not always be easy fighting for a cause; it may take a lot of perseverance, even in difficult times and standing up for the decisions made.

Service/ dedication to a cause also correlated highly with personal disposition: career resilience (PD: CR). Career resilience is about withstanding the vicissitudes of career changes (Coetzee, 2006; 2010; Fugate & Kinicki, 2006). Clearly, to be anchored in SD, one has to be resilient, as the jobs of such individuals are often not at all glamorous but essential. For instance, Schein (1990) gives the example of jobs such as nursing, working in the military and other humanitarian occupations. These are not highly paid positions, yet a lot is expected from the incumbents, physically, emotionally, even psychologically. Thus people with this anchor will be high in resilience and will be employable in such service areas without expecting high monetary returns.

Personal disposition: internal locus of control (PD: ILC) shows a strong positive relationship with entrepreneurial creativity (EC) and pure challenge (PC). People with a high internal locus of control attribute success and achievement to own effort, they persist with challenges, they enjoy discovering original solutions to tasks, enjoy working independently to reach goals, and they thrive when they are given space to take their own decisions (Coetzee, 2010). Similarly, people who are anchored in EC and PC have such qualities. They have a high internal locus of control.

The two anchors EC and PC also correlated strongly with personal disposition: entrepreneurial orientation (PD: EO). According to Coetzee, (2010), people with entrepreneurial orientation will tend to believe that they are responsible for their own successes and failures in their careers, tend to think about how things can be done differently, are comfortable in uncertain situations and are curious about new things. These qualities also strongly define people who are anchored in EC and PC (Schein, 1990). EC and PC were found to relate with the same construct in employability, because these two anchors are similar. Individuals who are anchored in one are likely to have the other as the second anchor (Schein, 1990).

Rather weak and insignificant relationships were found between cultural competence and technical/functional competence (TF), security/stability (SEC) and the lifestyle anchor (LF). Cultural competence is about knowing the customs of other cultures, being able to communicate inter-culturally, understanding the values and beliefs of

other cultures and appreciating working with people of other cultures. These weak relationships are understandable. People anchored in TF are concerned with applying their specialist knowledge, and more often than not, they work as consultants and individually; they are not expected to establish and maintain relationships, as long as they deliver the work that is expected of them. Most people with this anchor enjoy working from home, with minimal interaction with others (Schein, 1990). SEC anchored people are concerned about their personal safety and growth, thus they may feel somehow threatened by the uncertainty that cultural diversity brings in the workplace. This may pose a challenge for SEC anchored individuals in the 21st century, as cultural diversity is the order of the day in South African organisations. Lastly, people with the LF anchor are also concerned with their personal need to achieve a balance between work and their personal lives. Such individuals may also spend minimal time in an office environment, and thus may be used to their own culture and surroundings. They may find it difficult or even unnecessary to relate to people from other cultures.

Whereas cultural competence yielded poor relationships with most of the career anchors, a stronger relationship is seen with general management (GM). This relationship is to be expected, as general managers have to work with people and through people to achieve their work goals. They thus have to appreciate cultural diversity, treat everybody equally and be able to communicate effectively with people of different cultures. Understanding different cultures may also assist them to understand overt behaviour and to deal with interpersonal issues that may affect working effectively.

Even though weak relationships emerged between a few sub-constructs of career anchors and cultural competence as a sub-construct of employability, it can be concluded that there is a strong positive relationship between the sub-constructs of career anchors and employability. This further affirms the proposition of the study, namely that there is a significant positive relationship between career anchors and employability.

3.4.3. Career anchor and employability perspectives between different gender, age and racial groups

3.4.3.1. Gender

A statistically significant difference between males and females in their perceptions of career anchors and their level of employability emerged (as shown in table 3.12). Differences exist in the career anchor preferences of males and females. The reported higher mean scores for males than those of females in Technical/Functional (TF), General Management (GM), Entrepreneurial Creativity (EC), Autonomy/Independence (AI), Service/Dedication (SD) and Pure Challenge (PC) suggests that males showed a preference of these anchors. Females, on the other hand, showed a preference for security/stability and lifestyle anchors. This is in line with the results reported by Afrassa (2001) and Herrbach and Mignonac (2012) that females have anchors such as lifestyle and service dedication rather than anchors such as entrepreneurial, pure challenge and managerial competence and autonomy/independence, which are found in men, except that in this particular study, males rather than women showed preference in service dedication. This makes practical sense and is notable in today's pattern of living: women have the pressure of being homemakers and are the primary caregivers to children, and yet many have careers, thus constantly having to balance work and personal life. Many seek security in their jobs so that the future of their families is almost certainly guaranteed, also as a means of complementing their spouses' risky career decisions (Herrbach & Mignonac, 2012). Men, on the other hand, tend to feel validated by jobs where they will make decisions, be challenged, be at the top of the management structure or provide specialist technical knowledge (Herrbach & Mignonac, 2012).

In terms of employability, the results of this study showed significant mean differences in personal disposition: internal locus of control; personal disposition: entrepreneurial orientation – where the mean score of females was higher than that of males; and in personal disposition: sociability; personal disposition: emotional literacy; personal disposition: career resilience; and personal disposition: pro-activity – where the mean scores of males were higher than those of females. This contradicts the anticipated results: it was expected that males would have higher scores in entrepreneurial disposition: internal locus of control, as these correlated

strongly with the career anchors that are mainly found amongst men (Technical/Functional, General Management, Pure Challenge, Automy/Independence). It is possible that these results were affected by the fact that there were more women than men in the study.

A study by Beukes (2010) found that gender had a significant effect on employability, where males were more likely to gain employment than females after graduation. Women are often stereotyped as focusing on family issues and only paying secondary attention to paid employment. They are thus perceived as being less committed to their careers than their male counterparts are. As a result, they are often denied opportunities and access to types of careers that would support their overall employability (Clarke, 2008; Shih, 2002). In the South African context, gender inequality of the past apartheid regime still contributes to gender discrimination in the workplace. Whilst policies are in place to re-dress the inequalities of the past, the workplace continues to reflect more males at senior/top management, whereas women are still at the bottom of the hierarchy attempting to catch up (Beukes, 2010; Webster & Von Holdt; 2005). Redressing this issue may take a while as women (especially older women who experienced apartheid) lack the skills and education of their male counterparts. This thus perpetuates differences in employability perceptions and actual employability experience between males and females.

3.4.3.2. Age

Seeing that decisions about career mobility appear to depend heavily on career and life stage considerations, this study expected that employees' age would have an impact on career anchor and employability perceptions. The results confirmed that age has an impact on the career anchor perception in that there are significant differences in perceptions of development of career anchors between the ages 25 and younger and 26 to 40. The differences occurred in the following sub-constructs of career anchors; technical/functional competence (TF), autonomy/independence (AI); lifestyle (LF); and service/ dedication to a cause (SD). The results imply that employees within the category of 26-40 scored higher than employees within the category 25 and younger. The career anchor perceptions of 26-40 are more developed than those of 25 and younger. This is in line with the finding of Tladinyane (2006) that career anchors develop over time with experience: as age increases,

career anchors also become clearer and embedded in one's identity, thus eliminating other variables that impinge upon the career choice process. In addition, career anchors may prove to have greater value to older individuals rather than to younger individuals who are just starting out in their careers.

The results however did not confirm the expectation that age has an impact on employability perceptions. No significant difference was found in the perceptions of employability between the different age groups. It was expected that younger employees would perceive themselves as having more chances available to them as they have fresh skills, are willing to learn, are adaptable to change, and thus are more employable than older workers who may be perceived to have exhausted their potential, thus with little room for development. This idea was fuelled by the findings of Clarke (2008) that older workers tend to be seen as less likely to seek new challenges, less flexible, having less need for variation in their work, and displaying less desire to learn new skills, and thus may perceive themselves to be less employable. More and more older employees also find themselves looking for new opportunities due to retrenchments as a result of restructuring (Clarke, 2008). They have thus come to learn that experience and seniority is not enough to assure them a place in the workplace, and hence they have had to focus on developing themselves further and to take the notion of life-long learning seriously (Van der Heijde, De Lange & Van der Heijden, 2009). Organisations are also taking an active part in developing older employees by means of individual development plans for them that are based upon valid and reliable multi-source instruments (Van der Heijde *et al.*, 2009). Consequently, older persons' employability perceptions are improving; we see no significant difference between their perceptions and younger persons' perceptions in this study.

3.4.3.3. Racial group

The study found no significant differences in self-perceived employability as a result of racial differences. This corroborates a study conducted by Rothwell *et al.* (2009), where no significant differences in self-perceived employability scores were attributable to racial differences. In as much as the findings suggest that individuals' employability does not differ among racial groups, in South Africa, macro-economic policy issues such as black economic empowerment (BEE) and the employment

equity policy certainly influence racial demand in industry and thus stimulate racial differences in employability. In the near future, different results could possibly emerge (Beukes, 2010).

Significant differences in career anchor preferences were found to be attributable to racial differences. The results show that the mean score of Africans was higher than that of Indians in entrepreneurial creativity, service dedication to a cause, lifestyle, and autonomy and independence, while Africans scored higher in pure challenge and security and stability than whites. The higher mean score of Africans in this study could be attributable to the fact that the sample was dominantly Africans.

3.5. CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This section briefly presents core conclusions based on the findings of the study, limitations, and recommendations for future research. A comprehensive overview of conclusions, limitations and recommendations will be provided in Chapter 4.

3.5.1. Conclusions

Overall, it can be concluded that there are statistically significant, positive relationships between the dimensions of career anchors and employability. Furthermore, there is also a significant positive relationship between the sub-constructs of career anchors and employability. It can be derived from the research results and supporting literature that the relationship between career anchors and employability is a mutually beneficial one. Both constructs influence each other positively: an individual who has a well-developed career anchor is most likely to display qualities that enhance employability, such as confidence, skills, competence, etc. On the other hand, an individual who perceives him/herself to be employable is likely to find employment more easily and to be more self aware, more quickly establishing the career anchor.

It has also become clear that demographic factors such as age, gender and racial groups can influence the preferences of career anchors and perceptions of employability. The research results support those of previous studies, namely that individual differences such as demographic factors can affect perceptions of employability and preference of career anchors. Thus, in the 21st-century world of

work, this relationship between career anchors and employability is likely to have a positive impact on career decisions and individual success.

3.5.2. Limitations

Since the study was limited to a sample of participants only in the financial industry and only from one organisation, the findings cannot be generalised to other industries or organisations. Furthermore, given the exploratory nature of the research design, this study can yield no statements about causation. It only presents interpreted rather than established associations between the variables. The findings therefore need to be replicated with broader samples across the financial industry before final conclusions about the relationship between career anchors and employability can be drawn and generalised.

3.5.3. Recommendations

The findings of the study confirm the existence of a significant relationship between career anchors and employability. The findings further reveal that the relationship is mutually beneficial. The work done in this study has opened another door of enquiry in Industrial and Organisational Psychology. Future research can be done to confirm the proposed mutually beneficial relationship between career anchors and employability beyond doubt.

3.6.   CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter has presented the findings of the empirical study on the relationship between career anchors and employability. The findings have been integrated to reflect key observations regarding the relationship between the two constructs.

Chapter 4 elaborates on the conclusions, limitations and recommendations for future research practice.

CHAPTER 4
CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Chapter 4 focuses on conclusions drawn from this research study. In addition, the chapter highlights the limitations of both the literature review and the empirical results of the study and presents recommendations for practical application of the findings and for future studies.

4.1. CONCLUSIONS

Conclusions based on the literature review and the empirical findings are discussed in the following section.

4.1.1. Conclusions arising from the literature review

The objectives of the literature review were to conceptualise the concepts of career anchors and employability, the relationship between these two constructs and the implications of the relationship on career decision making in the 21st-century workplace from a theoretical perspective.

4.1.1.1. The first aim: to conceptualise career anchors and employability based on the literature

The available literature clarified that a career anchor is the evolving self-concept of what a person sees him or herself as being good at, what their needs and motives are and what values govern their career choices (Amundson *et al.,* 2009*;* Coetzee, 2006; Feldman & Bolino, 1996; Schein 1993). The anchor is the core of an internal career because it holds the career together in the midst of dramatic changes and chaos in the external career (Schein, 1996). It develops over years of experience and remains the same over the span of the entire career (Amundson *et al., 2009;* Coetzee, 2006; Feldman & Bolino, 1996; Schein, 1993).

Employability, on the other hand, is the capacity of an individual to gain initial employment, to maintain employment, and to move self-sufficiently within the labour market (De Cuyper *et al.,* 2008; McQuaid & Lindsay, 2005). It is influenced by factors such as skill and abilities, flexibility, adaptability, individual characteristics, and the conditions of the labour market.

In seeking an understanding of these constructs, the following models of career anchors were considered: Schein's model of career anchors, Feldman and Bolino's (1996) octagonal model, and Swartz's (1992) value structure model. Schein's model of career anchors was identified as the most appropriate for this study. In addition, those of employability, namely Fugate and Kinicki's (2008) dispositional model, Van Heijde and Van Heijden's (2006) competence-based approach to employability and Beukes's (2009) self-regulatory employability model, were examined. Beukes's (2009) self-regulatory employability model was identified as most appropriate for this study.

From the available literature, it has become clear that career anchors and employability are both important and are quite topical in today's Career Psychology literature, due to the role they play in the development of the internal career. It was, however, the researcher's view that the two constructs seem to be contradictory as the one (career anchors) emphasises stability and the other (employability) emphasises flexibility; hence the interest in finding the relationship between these two constructs.

4.1.1.2. The second aim: to determine the relationship between career anchors and employability from a theoretical perspective

From the study of literature, it appears that these two constructs positively influence each other: it is necessary to gain and maintain employment, and to be active in the labour market in order to develop a career anchor, which only develops with workplace experience (Fugate *at al.,* 2004; Schein, 1978; Van der Heijde & Van der Heijden, 2006). It has also become clear that knowing your dominant career anchor does not hinder employability; it assists an individual to make better internal career choices in the midst of external chaos.

The literature has further revealed that individuals characteristics such as age, gender, ethnicity, marital status, family responsibilities and health and wellness may also affect perceptions of career anchors and employability (Clarke, 2008). The study focused on the effects of age, race and gender only.

From the literature review, it has emerged that gender has a significant effect on employability, where males are more likely to gain employment than females after

graduation (Beukes, 2010; Shih, 2002). Gender has also been found to influence individuals' career anchors. Research shows that females have anchors such as lifestyle and service dedication rather than entrepreneurial, pure challenge and managerial competence anchors that are found in men (Herrbach & Mignonac, 2012).

In terms of age, career anchors of older employees may be more developed than in their younger counterparts and thus they may benefit more in the use of their anchors. While this is so, there is a stereotype that older employees are resistant to change, less willing to learn and even challenged in terms of health and well-being. These attitudes and circumstances may negatively affect their employability, and hence they are likely to perceive themselves to be less employable (Clarke 2008).

In studies by Rothwell *et al.* (2009) and Beukes (2010), no significant differences in self-perceived employability scores were attributable to racial differences. Research has revealed contradictory findings concerning the effects of race on perceptions of career anchors.

Based on the literature review it follows that employability creates a platform where a person can enter the world of work, develop, and get to know and entrench their career self, and thus develop their career anchor. On the other hand, once the career anchor is fully developed, the individual can be more employable, since knowing their dominant anchor can boost confidence and the ability to present themselves well when career growth opportunities arise. There is therefore a definite positive interplay between these two concepts.

4.1.1.3. The third aim: to conceptualise the implications of the theoretical relationship between career anchors and employability on career decision making in the 21st-century workplace

The literature review has shown that, given the diminishing psychological contract between the employer and employee, where uncertainty in the employment relationship is high, the mutual relationship between career anchors and employability enables the employee to make informed career decisions due to the increased self-awareness that develops in the process of developing a career anchor and enhancing employability.

It follows that a well-developed career anchor is likely to enhance employability, and thus open up career opportunities for the individual. The individual is likely to enjoy a stable career in the uncertain labour market, because a clear career anchor and high levels of employability will likely give an individual a choice and career mobility and growth. Therefore, the theoretical relationship between career anchors and employability enables the individual to enjoy a stable career in the midst of an unstable 21st-century labour market.

4.1.2. Conclusions of the empirical study

The empirical study set out to

- investigate the empirical relationship between career anchors and employability as it manifests within early-life workers in a South Africa company;
- empirically determine whether individuals from different gender, age, and racial groups differ significantly with reference to their perception of career anchors and their level of employability, as manifested within a sample of early adult workers in a South African organisation; and
- provide recommendations for the practice of Industrial and Organisational Psychology and career guidance and to suggest further research strategies based on the findings of the research.

4.1.2.1. The first aim: to investigate the empirical relationship between career anchors and employability as it manifests within early-life workers in a South Africa company

Linked to the first aim was H1: There is a statistically significant relationship between perceived sub-constructs of career anchors and employability. The following conclusions were drawn:

The findings provide supportive evidence of H1. A conclusion can be drawn that the sub-constructs of career anchors and employability relate positively. This supports the findings of the theoretical aspect of the study that there is a significant and positive relationship between career anchors and employability.

4.1.2.2. The second aim: to empirically determine whether individuals from different gender, age, and racial groups differ significantly regarding their perception of career anchors and their level of employability, as manifested within a sample of early adult workers in a South African organisation.

Linked to the second aim were H2, H3 and H4.

H2: Individuals from different gender groups differ significantly concerning their perception of career anchors and their level of employability. The following conclusions were drawn:

The findings provided supportive evidence of H2. A statistically significant difference between males and females in their perceptions of career anchors and employability emerged. The results confirm the findings of the literature review. The empirical findings showed that mean scores of males were higher than those of women in technical functional, general managerial, autonomy/independence, service dedication and pure challenge, whereas females showed a preference in career anchors such as security and lifestyle. A conclusion can be drawn that females are most likely to have such anchors as they have to balance home making and raising children with careers, as opposed to men who are simply focused on their careers and are validated by jobs where they will be challenged and make decisions.

As for employability, empirical findings contradicted the findings of the literature review. It was expected that males would score higher in personal disposition: internal locus of control and personal disposition: entrepreneurial creativity, because males are most likely to be entrepreneurial and tend to attribute success and achievement to own efforts. It can be concluded that research shows inconsistent findings concerning differences in perceptions of employability between males and females. Further research in this area could yield more clarity.

H3: Individuals from different age groups differ significantly about their perception of career anchors and their level of employability. The following conclusions were drawn:

Based on the empirical findings, there was not sufficient evidence to fully support this hypothesis. Concerning age, significant differences were found only regarding career anchors. Differences emerged between age groups 25 and younger and 26-40,

where age group 26-40 scored higher in most anchors than 25 and younger. It follows that as age increases, career anchors also become clearer and embedded in one's identity and older workers are likely to benefit more than younger workers from knowing their anchors.

The empirical research did not confirm what was suggested in the literature review in terms of age moderating employability perception. No significant differences were found between different age groups concerning employability perceptions.

H4: Individuals from different racial groups differ significantly concerning their perception of career anchors and their level of employability. The following conclusions were drawn:

Based on the research results, there was not sufficient evidence to fully support this hypothesis. The study found no significant differences in self-perceived employability as a result of racial differences. This is in line with the literature review findings in a study by Rothwell *et al*. (2009).

Significant racial differences were however found in terms of career anchors. The mean scores of Africans were higher than those of Indians and whites in all of the sub-constructs. High mean scores of Africans in career anchors in this study could be attributed to the fact that the sample was predominantly African. The literature review provided inconsistent results in this regard. Further research would be needed before conclusive arguments can be put forward.

4.1.2.3. Conclusions related to the central hypothesis: there is a statistically positive and significant relationship between career anchors and employability.

In respect of the central hypothesis, it can be concluded that there is a statistically significant, positive relationship between career anchors and employability. Furthermore, there is also a significant positive relationship between the sub-constructs of career anchors and employability. The research results and supporting literature confirm that the relationship between career anchors and employability is a mutually beneficial relationship. Both constructs influence each other positively.

4.1.3. Conclusions regarding the contribution of this study to the field of Industrial and Organisational Psychology

The study was mainly prompted by the current dearth of or insufficient information in the area of career anchors in the South African setting and aimed to expand on the existing theory in employability.

Industrial and Organisational Psychology in South Africa faces a lack of sufficient empirical research conducted within the South African context to substantiate its claims, to prove it a valuable scientific wing of psychology, and to gain recognition and respect from the business management fraternity. It has relied too much on overseas research that cannot be generalised to the dynamic South African context.

This study contributes to the much-needed knowledge base in the field of Industrial and Organisational Psychology in South Africa. The literature review holds valuable information of models of both the constructs, some of which were applied in this particular study to test relevance in the South African environment. Information that has not been applied in this study can be further studied by other students in the field. The findings from this study contribute a new angle to the study of employability in South Africa. Studies of employability have mainly focused on the perspective of graduate employability (the school-work transition phase). Very little has been done on employability issues facing the working population at large. As restructuring has become widespread in the country due to the economic recession, it was important to take a fresh approach and study employability from the angle of those that are already in the market and use existing models and theories to equip the individual and organisations to cope with the trends within the labour market. This study will steer organisations to devise strategies that will suit them in terms of retaining highly employable individuals and restoring trust in the employment relationship, thus rather making it work than giving up on it.

It is the researcher's belief that the research will promote interest in the study of career anchors in the South African context, where there seems to be a lack of knowledge or interest pertaining to this construct amongst Human Resource practitioners who are end users of strategies developed by Industrial and Organisational Psychologists. It is envisaged that the results of this research will encourage organisations to take career counselling within the workplace seriously

and develop ways to introduce it or enhance it in South African organisations. It may help organisations realise that career counselling in the workplace can be used as a tool for retention instead of giving in to the cycle that has developed in South African organisations of talent rotating within the industry.

4.2. LIMITATIONS

Limitations of the literature review and the empirical study are reviewed in this section.

The literature study encountered the following limitations:

a Given the exploratory nature of the research design, this study can yield no statements about causation. It has only presented interpreted rather than established associations between the variables.

b Only two variables were studied (career anchors and employability); therefore, it cannot give a holistic indication of factors or variables that may potentially influence the employability potential of individuals.

The empirical study encountered the following limitations:

a Since the study was limited to a sample of participants in the financial industry and from one organisation only, the findings cannot be generalised to other industries or organisations. These findings therefore need to be replicated with broader samples across the financial industry before final conclusions can be drawn and generalised about the relationship between career anchors and employability.

b The researcher handpicked the organisation that participated, and participation was voluntary, thus not allowing for random sampling from the general population, which further diminishes generirisability of the results.

c The sample was dominantly African; there were not enough Indians, whites and coloureds. This could have skewed the results.

d The sample was also skewed in terms of gender: there were many more females than males.

4.3. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, conclusions and limitations of this study, recommendations for Industrial and Organisational Psychology and further research in the field are outlined below:

4.3.1. Recommendations regarding career guidance and counselling

Based on the results of the study, both from literature review and empirical study, the following recommendations for career guidance and counselling are proposed:

As the results show a significant positive relationship between career anchors and employability, it is recommended that these two constructs are tested in the real working world and used in real career guidance counselling. It is recommended that the self-regulatory employability model as a whole as developed by Beukes (2009) be used. Due to the fact that employability in this study is focussed on working adults, this model would be suited in processes such as career guidance (for those looking for change within the organisation), and succession planning in the working environment (to track personal growth of employees). The model provides a holistic approach and continuing process for career management, training and development when conducting career self-management training interventions in order to support employees in developing self-management behaviours, skills and attitudes. The other benefit of utilising this model is that it draws on the employability skills, and hence enables individuals to simultaneously develop those skills while developing their careers.

Schein's Career Anchor Orientations Inventory (COI) (tool only) can be used within Beukes's (2009) self-regulatory model of employability in the audit and alignment phase, as part of the psychometric battery that is used when individuals do the self audit on their competences, skills and interest and where these are in demand. The COI profile provides all such information and even provides a list of occupations that one can follow with the dominant anchor identified. The report can then be discussed accordingly with the individual paired with other psychometric tools used at this stage. Knowing one's anchor can clarify issues that were not clear in the review of one's current position and perhaps assist one in re-aligning one's career in the future. This would then lead to stage two of having a clear career goal, stage three of

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attaining training, stage four of presenting oneself at interviews for promotions, and stage five of actually being promoted and enjoying the benefits of enhanced employability.
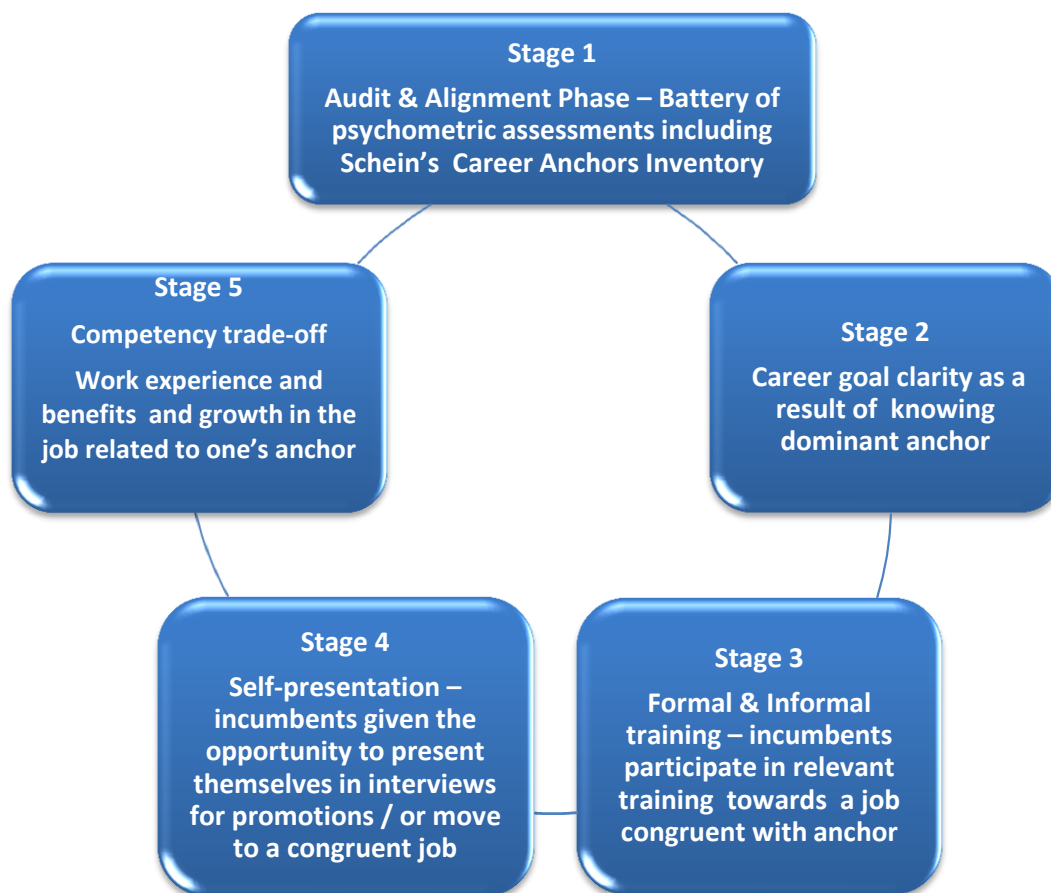
Stage 1

Audit & Alignment Phase – Battery of psychometric assessments including Schein's Career Anchors Inventory

Stage 5

Competency trade-off

Work experience and benefits and growth in the job related to one's anchor

Stage 2

Career goal clarity as a result of knowing dominant anchor

Stage 4

Self-presentation – incumbents given the opportunity to present themselves in interviews for promotions / or move to a congruent job

Stage 3

Formal & Informal training – incumbents participate in relevant training towards a job congruent with anchor

Figure 4.1: Integration and use of career anchors and employability in career guidance and counselling.

4.3.2. Recommendations for further research

To enhance external validity, future research efforts should focus on obtaining a more ethnically and gender representative sample. There is a need for more research on career anchors and employability in the South African context. Further studies would be helpful for career counselling purposes, and would assist career counsellors with developing career counselling and guidance frameworks and interventions to help individuals gain insight into their career anchors and enhance their employability.

4.4.   INTEGRATION OF THE RESEARCH

This research explored the relationship between career anchors and employability. The results indicate that these variables play a critical role in the self-management of an individual's career and are thus relevant for career guidance and counselling. Much of the responsibility for managing careers is currently shifting from employers to adaptive and proactive employees (Bridgestock, 2009; Coetzee, 2006). Researchers have argued that, in an increasingly chaotic organisational environment, workers will experience a great range and frequency of transitions during their working lives, and will need to take responsibility for charting and navigating their careers (Bridgestock, 2009; Coetzee, 2006). This requires a high degree of personal initiative such as knowing one's career anchor and being pro-active in enhancing one's employability (Beukes, 2010).

The literature review indicates that the variables of career anchors and employability are significantly related. The contemporary world of work requires that individuals manage and develop their own careers. An understanding of the process of the development of career anchors and knowing how to integrate them with employability will assist individuals in managing their career development more proactively.

The empirical study explored the statistical relationship between career anchors and employability. The statistically significant evidence supports the central hypothesis that a relationship does exist between career anchors and employability.

In conclusion, findings from this study provide more insight regarding the relationship between career anchors and employability, which may prove useful to industrial psychologists, career counsellors and the human resources fraternity at large. This study and its recommendations for further research should be seen as a step towards making a positive contribution to the field of Industrial and Organisational Psychology in the South African context.

4.5.   CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter has discussed the conclusions emerging from the study, both in terms of the theoretical and the empirical objectives. It has taken cognisance of possible limitations pertaining to both the theoretical and the empirical aspects of the study. In addition, it has proposed recommendations for career guidance and counselling and future research to explore the relationship between career anchors and employability. Finally, it has presented an integration of the research, emphasising the extent to which the study's results provide support for the relationship that exists between the variables of career anchors and employability.

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APPENDIX 1: Informed consent for participants

You are being invited to participate in a research study about the relationship between career anchors and employability.This research project is being conducted by Fezeka Ndzube, Masters Student at the University of South Africa

The topic of this study is:

The relationship between career anchors and employability

The objective of this research project is to explore the relationship between career anchors and employability.

Procedure is as follows:

- A meeting was held with HR GM and HR Manager which was to bring them to an understanding of the purpose of this research and to gain their support and to build a working relationship. Permission was requested from the HR GM and HR Manager to collect data from the organization.
- Surveys will then be handed out to individuals, and I will explain how the questionnaire should be completed. The questionnaires will be handed back to me as the participants finish completing them.

There are no known risks if you decide to participate in this research study, nor are there any costs for participating in the study. The information you provide will enable me to complete the research component of my studies. The information collected may not benefit you directly, but what I learn from this study should provide general benefits to employees and the company.

This survey is anonymous. If you choose to participate, <u>do</u> <u>not</u> write your name on the questionnaire. No one will be able to identify you. No one will know whether you participated in this study. Nothing you say on the questionnaire will in any way influence your present or future employment with the company.

Your participation in this study is voluntary.

If you have any questions or concerns about completing the questionnaire or about participating in this study, you may contact me at 084 411 7704/ 011 042 6198 or email me on fndzube00@gmail.com.

Signature of Participant: _____