

Nature of Individual Career Planning of Workers and Its Influence on job Satisfaction: A Case Study of Workers Employed in the C.V.Gooneratne International Industrial Park in Avissawella.

H.M.S.Priyanath
Department of Social Sciences
Sabaragamuwa University, Belihuloya
W.D.N.S.Mendis

Abstract

This paper discusses the nature of career planning of workers and how far individual career planning of workers affects their job satisfaction. The study is based on primary data gathered from a survey conducted in the C.V.Gooneratne International Industrial Park in Avissawella. One hundred and thirty three workers including managers and laborers were selected from all industries in the aforesaid industrial park using stratified random sampling method. Data was collected using a semi-structured questionnaire and was analyzed using both quantitative and qualitative methods.

The study found that the career planning of workers is not at a satisfactory level, for workers are not aware of the individual career planning and its importance. Their career planning has not followed vocational self-concepts at their respective ages. Career planning of workers differ among different occupational categories such as managers and laborers, and also among different educational and age levels of the workers. Relationship between occupational interest and the current occupation of workers remains very poor, which is also true of the organizational interest and current organization. Therefore, workers are not satisfied with their job. The root cause for workers' job dissatisfaction is the lack of happiness in the career. It leads to a state of increasing career mobility of workers. As a result, the labor productivity and also the labor specialization of the workers do not develop. Therefore, the career planning should receive adequate attention of both employees and employers.

Introduction

Almost every worker spends his/her two thirds of life with his/her job. For them, "job" means not only the source of living but also the source of happiness in the life. Thus 'career' today plays a prominent role in a worker's lifetime. The term 'career' is defined as 'an individually perceived sequence of attitudes and behaviors associated with work-related activities and experiences over the span of a person's life' (Hall, 1986: 3). The career success highly depends on the extent to which the jobholder had planned for his/her career and future advancement in it. This presupposes people to grow up with a clear picture of his/her future career. The picture of working life, known as career plan, consists of a set of predetermined career goals accompanied by action plans for achieving those goals. Therefore, career planning involves a deliberate attempt by an individual to become more aware of his/her own skills, interests, values, opportunities, constraints, choices and consequences (Hall, 1986: 2-3). The

context in which career decisions are commonly made is dynamic, occupations are changing rapidly, society is becoming increasingly complex and multicultural and individuals need to plan for diverging rather than converging career paths. The initial point in one's life is to identify "who I am"? and "what I want to be"? It would be more useful for a person to start a search with a defined target, rather than groping in the darkness. That includes the desired type of work, preferred category of organization to be dealt with, level of responsibility on job, a satisfactory level of salary, opportunity for future advancement in career, desired working conditions and working environment, the skills and types of knowledge to be used and type of subordinates and coworkers to be dealt with (Jung et al, 2000: 44).

Individuals can gain career happiness by planning their careers and following those plans during their career span. Workers can enjoy career happiness by finding or developing careers that allow them to express their core identities and values that tap in to their true essence. People who perform jobs which are aligned with their career plans experience a greater sense of self-esteem from doing what one is able to do and wants to do. Once an individual directs his/her career via his/her career plan, there is greater possibility of being a pioneer/expert in his/her area of specialization, since a job selected, based on one's career planning stands for personal values of the jobholder. Thereby leaving no room for conflict between the job and the jobholder. Then it prevents role erosion, job stress and role conflict. On the other hand, it increases role expectation and strengthens the feeling of self-efficacy. As workers enjoy the joy of working than struggling with their jobs, there is less possibility to catch them with stress related illness and other occupational diseases. The match between job and the jobholder creates the foundation for connecting the workers' spirit, with the work serving as a tool of employee motivation.

Hiring people who had grown up with career planning would produce several benefits to the organizations. Recruitment based on individual career planning ensures that the organization places the right people in the right place at the right time. It reduces the employee turnover rate and absenteeism as workers' core-selves are merged with their jobs, opening opportunities for retaining and attracting of good employees while improving too the employees' commitment and overall organizational performance.

It is a general fact that the productivity of private sector organizations depends on their managerial efficiency. Managerial efficiency highly depends on the extent to which workers are satisfied with their jobs and to which extent they are motivated towards their job performance. When a person is doing what he/she really wants, there will be a deeper sense of personal satisfaction than ever before (Clark, 1999: 93). Since human resource is the key factor that inspires organizational future, it is vital to keep them satisfied with their jobs. Thus, how far individuals have planned their careers and the identification of career planning within the organizational context are very important parameters of overall organizational productivity.

The concept of individual career planning is not strange for people in western countries and also some of the Asian countries. In those countries, not only individuals and organizations caring for career planning but also the Governments devote much attention on individual career planning by several means. What does Sri Lanka show in this direction? Have individuals and organizations paid enough attention on the matter? The aim of the current study

is to identify the nature of individual career planning of workers, and how far individual career planning of workers makes an impact on job satisfaction.

Methodology

Both primary and secondary data were used for this study. The primary data was collected from 133 workers employed in C.V. Gooneratne International Industrial Park in Avissawella. In 2004, a total of 33 manufacturing industries functioned in the said park; these fall in to five categories according to two digits industrial classification of International Standard of Industrial Classification (ISIC) i.e. ISIC 31, ISIC 32, ISIC 33, ISIC 35 and ISIC 36 and a total of 1331 workers (both managers and laborers) were employed in the industrial park. Out of the total number of workers employed in those industries, 133 workers i.e. 10% of the total (23 managers and 110 laborers) were selected as the sample of the study using stratified random sampling method. The data was collected using a semi-structured questionnaire and analyzed using both quantitative and qualitative methods specially using percentages and correlation.

Results and Discussion

The paper discusses the results of the study with special focus on the nature of workers' career planning and its relationship to job satisfaction.

1). Nature of Workers' Career Planning

Nature of workers' career planning is investigated through the under mentioned means such as the stage of career planning, vocational self-concept workers, effectiveness of vocational training of workers and workers' awareness of career planning.

a) Stages of workers' career planning

Some people grow up with a very clear idea of the career they would engage in the future, and they plan to achieve it from an early age. But the majority of others are less certain about their career goals and preferences. After all, there are many occupations to choose from among and although they think they might like a certain career, they really do not know enough about the field to commit themselves to it.

Super (1957) in his 'life-span' theory suggested that seeds of occupational interests of individuals come in to surface in their early ages ('growth' stage-from birth to 15 years) and remain longer in one's career span as a major influencer of his/her occupational choices (www.careernet.state.md.us/careertheory.htm). According to Super, individuals naturally plan for their careers by forming their vocational interests in the aforesaid stage of their life. But the nature of career planning of the workers discussed out of the sample here is too different from the above generalization. Some 48.1% of workers of the sample do not have a definite career goal. There is no strong desire for them to be, what their inner self wants to be. Lack of career planning is associated with the place of the workers in the organizational structure. The study found the following evidence for the above reasoning. Every manager had a specific career objective with them (100%) while only 41.8% of laborers in the sample had an idea about his/her

prospective careers. They had begun their journey without knowing where they were going.

The stages in which workers in the sample started to plan for their careers are incompatible with the vocational development tasks proposed by the life-span theory.

Table 1: Stages in which workers form career objectives

Stage	Managers		Laborers		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Before G.C.E. (O/L)	2	8.9	4	3.6	6	4.5
After G.C.E. (O/L)	3	13.0	34	30.9	37	27.8
After G.C.E. (A/L)	6	26.1	23	20.9	29	21.8
During undergraduate education	11	47.8	-	-	11	8.3
After first job	1	4.4	28	25.5	29	21.8
After marriage	-	-	21	19.1	21	15.8
Total	23	100	110	100	133	100

Table 1 shows that only a small number of workers (4.5%) had formed their career objectives before G.C.E. (O/L) whereas some groups had planned their careers just after they obtained their first job (21.8%). The latter has set objectives that seem to be prospective for them after being experienced in their working life. The study observed differences between career planning of managers and laborers. Managerial group shows a progressive manner when they had planned their careers. Many of them (47.8%) had formed their career goals based on the specialized area of study during their undergraduate education. On the part of the laborers the career goals took place during the stages such as after O/L, A/L and after marriage. In Sri Lanka, a large proportion of students enter the job market after O/L and A/L examinations, the job being the only option available to them and they do not qualify for secondary education or the university entrance. Some younger groups had no idea of a career goal until after they got married. Together with the responsibilities proposed by married life, they have to reinvent their careers with a stable career plan.

b) Workers' vocational self-concept

It is maintained that the vocational self-concept factor develops through physical and mental growth, observation of work, and identification of working adults, general working environment and general experiences. As experiences become broader in relation to awareness of the world of work, the more the sophisticated vocational self-concept is formed (www.careernet). The vocational self-concepts of the workers in the sample are entirely different from their present occupations. Some of those tentative vocational interests of workers during their primary school ages had been doctors, teachers, drivers, soldiers and nurses. Out of the total amount of laborers in the sample, nearly 63% were attracted to jobs such as soldiers, drivers, teachers and nurses, jobs which do not generally fall in to the highly professional category. It implies that workers in question did not receive enough experience in relation to the world of work during their early ages to make a decision.

Table 2: Attempt made by workers to achieve their vocational self-concept

Attempt	Managers		Laborers		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Highly attempted	6	26.1	13	11.8	19	14.3
Moderately attempted	10	43.5	41	37.3	51	38.3
Not attempted	7	30.4	56	50.9	63	47.4
Total	23	100	110	100	133	100

According to Table 2, the Majority (50.9 %) of laborers have not made any attempt to reach their vocational interests. They have failed to identify the areas in which they have a special ability in their formative periods. Workers who did not attempt to achieve their vocational interests were unable to provide a valid reason for their negligence. The lack of awareness and understanding about the career planning and the world of work have contributed to this situation.

According to Table 3, in the case of laborers with failed attempts, the educational factors have acted as barriers to harvest their efforts. There were laborers as well as managers who had failed in mathematics at the G.C.E. (O/L) Examination, thus losing the opportunity to continue their secondary education via their preferred educational field. The second most important reason is the lack of proper guidance, which is useful for those in early ages to plan their future working life. Besides, the formal education system both in schools and universities in Sri Lanka does not carry such guidance.

Table 3: Failure of vocational self-concepts

Reason	Managers		Laborers		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Inability to fulfill required educational qualifications	3	23.1	19	39.6	22	36.0
Not having guidance for further development	5	38.5	10	20.8	15	24.6
Unavailability of required facilities within the living area	3	23.1	7	14.6	10	16.4
Other socioeconomic factors	2	15.3	12	25	14	23.0
Total	23	100	110	100	133	100

c) Effectiveness of vocational training of workers

People change with time and experience and progresses through the respective vocational development stages (www.careernet). People enter the world of work just after they finish their school education. They have to undergo a crucial decision-making process in their life where they are required to decide whether they continue their higher education or find out means of living. Decision-making theories hypothesize that there are critical points in people's lives that the choices made in such points immensely influence their career development.

These points are educational choices, entry-level job positions, changing jobs etc (www.careernet). But one may find it very difficult to pick up evidence from Sri Lankan workforce to support the above theorization. Because workers made their occupational choices on several grounds other than their career plans.

According to the vocational development tasks of Life-Span theory by Donald Super, people tend to develop their skills in relation to their career objectives and obtain training for it, after they complete their formal education (www.careernet). Super (1957) had labeled this vocational development task as 'implementation'- where people implement their career plans (15-24 years). When it comes to the Sri Lankan workers, it is uncommon to see that the aforesaid age group follows a specified vocational training course/professional course aiming a specified occupation.

Table 4 shows that the majority of managers (73%) had undergone thorough vocational training programs. It means in general, managers had some sort of intention about the kind of work they want to have in future. But in the case of laborers, many of them (54%) had not focused their attention on following a vocational training program aimed at a specified occupation.

Even though 46% of the sample had obtained some unguided vocational training, only very few of them had chosen those programs according to their career plans.

Workers who follow training programs of their interests are supposed to be those with a defined career plan. As highlighted in the reasons given by the sample re. training programs, an insignificant (9.8%) amount of workers had planned their careers. When compared to the managers, laborers seem to be attracted to training based on grounds such as forced by the parents (32.6%) and as a fashion (19.6%) etc.

Table 4: Reasons for following professional /vocational training courses

Reason	Managers		Laborers		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Own interest	6	40.0	7	15.2	13	21.3
Aiming a specified job	5	33.4	13	28.3	18	29.5
Forced by parents	2	13.3	15	32.6	17	27.9
The friend is doing!	2	13.3	9	19.6	11	18.0
Others	-	-	2	4.3	2	3.3
Total	15	100	46	100	61	100

Those who had followed a vocational course with an intention to get any kind of job cannot be considered as followers of a definite career plan. Because they followed a course just only to make a living. Their aim was to find "a job", not "the job". Then, being trained, they are compelled to get a job, which is not of their interest and with no representation in their core-self. Workers consider those training programs as an easy way of getting a job, and therefore they do not worry about their interests and values. But later on, workers find it difficult to carry out their duties in the job, as they do not reflect on their work identity, thereby eroding into their happiness on their job. The ultimate results will be the change of job to find a better career match, where they can express their core identities on working.

d) Workers' awareness of career planning

Table 5 shows that the majority (60.9%) of workers are unaware of an individual career planning process. Meanwhile the level of awareness of career planning reflects differences between managers and laborers. It came out that as only 13.0% of managers are unaware of career planning in their life, on the part of the laborers it is 70.9%. The level of workers' awareness of career planning is compatible with their level of education. Those who had higher educational backgrounds together with their formal school education hold higher or moderate level of awareness of career planning.

Table 5: Workers' awareness of career planning

Awareness	Managers		Laborers		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Aware	12	52.2	9	8.2	21	15.8
Moderately aware	8	34.8	23	20.9	31	23.3
Unaware	3	13.0	78	70.9	81	60.9
Total	23	100	110	100	133	100

Every manager in the sample holds at least G.C.E. (A/L) qualification. Further more 87% of managers had awareness about the career planning. But laborers (70%) with less than G.C.E. (O/L) qualification have not had an idea about individual career planning. This implies that there is a negative impact of the level of education on workers' awareness about career planning.

Among those managers with awareness of individual career planning, 60.0% wish to retain their present job and advance in it. That implies the extent to which those workers have been bound to their jobs. This group of managers represents the type of workers who had planned their careers based on their present job regardless of whether they selected the job willingly or not. Disputatively, the majority of laborers have not shown an intention to retain their present job. Some 53.1% of laborers do their present job until they receive one better. This indicates how poorly they are bound to their current job. Even though those laborers now have awareness about career planning, they have not driven their career according to their own career plan.

Table 6: Age composition of workers with awareness about career planning

Age group	Managers		Laborers		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
30 or less than 30 years	-	-	23	71.9	23	44.2
31-40 years	7	35.0	7	21.9	14	26.9
41-50 years	11	55.0	2	6.2	13	25.0
51 or more than 51 years	2	10.0	-	-	2	3.9
Total	20	100	32	100	52	100

According to Table 6, most managers who are having career plans are older than 41 years (65%). As mentioned previously, majority of them intend to retain their present job. There is no room for them to start their career in a different field due to the lack of lifetime, thus forcing them to advance in their present job contrary to their occupational preferences. A significant number of laborers that are having some sort of knowledge of career planning are still trying to accomplish their career plan. That is why they are doing this job just to be qualified to get another job with a good career match. Some 71.9% of the laborers with good knowledge of career planning fall in to age group 30 or less than 30 years. That means the younger generation who are having career planning knowledge divert their attention to succeed in their career plans during their forthcoming career span.

2). Career planning and job satisfaction

In the light of job satisfaction, career planning is very important for the satisfaction factor in the job. The study attempts to find out how far it affects job satisfaction.

a) Occupational interest and occupational choice

Job mobility is most prevalent among individuals who wanted to do a job at any cost just for the sake of doing a job. The initial decade of a person's career characterizes high job mobility. Most of this mobility is the result of job-to-job transitions rather than unemployment and reflects the worker's desire to find a better career match (Keith & McWilliams, 1999: 255). This state of affairs brings out the point that they had done something wrong in the choice of their present jobs i.e. without following career plans.

The extent to which workers had planned their careers is reflected by their opinion about the present occupation. If the present job is the one that he/she anticipated, it stands proof of planning his/her career. The majority (71.4%) of workers had not anticipated their present job. That proportion includes 82.1% of laborers and 17.9% of managers. The reasons for the above situation are shown in Table 7. Their present job did not suit their core-self. Since 35.3% of managers' as well as 37.2% of laborers' present jobs are not the ones they had preferred, a problem with the selection of the job is indicated.

Table 7: The difference between the present job and the anticipated job

Reasons for not fitting into ones' preference	Managers		Laborers		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Job does not match with training obtained	1	5.9	23	29.5	24	25.3
Job is not the preferred type of job	6	35.3	29	37.2	35	36.8
Job is not a suitable job according to educational qualifications	3	17.6	16	20.5	19	20.0
Career field is not preferred	7	41.2	6	7.7	13	13.7
Others	-	-	4	5.1	4	4.2
Total	17	100	78	100	95	100

The reason behind the above fact is that they have not had a proper direction while they were being trained. The other is, they have not followed their career plans when they selected the job. As a result they had embarked on a wrong career that is far away from either their previous training or preferred occupational types. It is the labor market conditions which are to be held responsible for the above mentioned career mistakes. As Sri Lankan workers face difficulty to find a job due to the structured unemployment in the Sri Lankan labor market, no one will let any offer of job to go away in spite of occupational interests and previous training. They believe that waiting for a better career match will end up with unemployment.

Occupational interest provides the base for workers' career plan. Unless occupational interests are aligned with occupational choices, workers are not motivated to be excelling in their jobs. There is a strong positive impact of job satisfaction on workers' job performance. On the other hand, the extent to which workers are satisfied with their jobs depends on the match between their occupational interests and occupational choices in present jobs.

Table 8: Workers' intention about their present job

Level of Satisfaction	Managers		Laborers		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Satisfied	4	17.4	15	13.7	19	14.3
Moderately satisfied	13	56.5	26	23.6	39	29.3
Dissatisfied	6	26.1	69	62.7	75	56.4
Total	23	100	110	100	133	100

Table 8 shows that the majority of workers (56.4%) have expressed their dissatisfaction over their present job. Coefficient of correlation between occupational interest and present occupation of workers' in the sample is 0.48 (r_k : Spearman's Rank coefficient of correlation method). The relationship between occupational interest and present occupation is very poor. For a strong relationship, coefficient should be equal or approximate to one (1). Otherwise it is considered, as no relationship exists between variables. Above statistical evidence leads to the conclusion that the occupational interests of workers were not addressed by the present occupation.

Most workers are not doing what they really want. It does not however imply that they fail to fulfill responsibilities charged by their present job. But they are not happy with what they are doing. If this is the case, are their contributions up to their potential level? Can a job one dislikes absorb ones' full capacity?

Career happiness is the main source of job satisfaction (Hendreson, 1999: 6). Career happiness results when individuals find or develop careers which allow them to express their core identities and values that tap in to their true essence. The reason that the majority of workers are dissatisfied is that they are not fortunate enough to find career happiness in their present jobs. Again workers themselves are the responsible party for their job dissatisfaction. This is all because they have not planned their career in their relevant life stages and not kept on following it.

The percentage of laborers who said that they are dissatisfied with their present job is two times higher than the percentage of managers with similar background. Out of the total laborers in the sample, 62.7% of laborers are dissatisfied while it is only 26.1% in the case of managers. It implies, in general, that managers have paid some sort of attention on their career plans at the time they selected the present job. The main factors which affect this phenomenon are workers' ability to understand their core-self, educational level, financial stability, general understanding of the world of work, awareness of labor market trends and socio-cultural factors. Laborers who had entered the present job without considering either their career plans or occupational interests found that they were not satisfied with their jobs. Still, they have not identified what is wrong with them. The reasons given for their dissatisfaction reflected the above fact. They encounter problems with working hours, unwillingness to work on a shift basis, unfavorable working conditions, lack of economic advantages, lack of flexi time and difficulty of getting leave and the heavy duties demanded by the job.

Laborers who are satisfied with their present jobs also do not provide a valid reason for their satisfaction. It means most of them are attracted to their jobs not because that the job matches with their career plan, but because of some other reasons such as income potential, easy approach to work places from their residences, as both can work at the same place in the case of married workers, because of their children's education, as present job seems to be good when compared to the previous jobs held and helps to reduce the cost of living (other benefits, especially the meals). Some 73.9% of managers in their mid 40s said that they are satisfied with their present job. Perhaps they have understood that there will be no point of changing careers during the next few years of their career span even though they are not highly interested in performing their present job. Therefore they have thought it fit to advance via it. The shadows of job dissatisfaction can be seen, as the job they are doing now is not the exact one, which they dreamed to have. The current state of career planning in workers' working life is reflected by their future career related goals.

Table 9: Future career plans of workers

Objective	Managers		Laborers		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Retain and advance on present job.	12	52.2	29	26.4	41	30.8
Get a more suitable job than present job	7	30.4	54	49.1	61	45.9
Be qualified to get another job by doing present job	4	17.4	14	12.7	18	13.5
Other	-	-	13	11.8	13	9.8
Total	23	100	110	100	133	100

A large proportion of workers are looking forward to change their careers in the future. Table 9 reveals that 45.9% of workers intend to get a more suitable job than their present job. That is, they do not consider their present job as 100% suitable for them. Another 13.5% of workers expect to carry on their present job until they get qualified to get another. Only 30.8% of workers had decided to retain the present job.

Any of the above reasons do not provide evidence for the existence of workers' career plans. Because the facts backed by each objective are not merely the workers' career objectives.

Table 10: Reasons for not changing the present job in future

Reason	Managers		Laborers		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Inability to begin a career in another field due to lack of time.	4	33.4	2	6.9	6	14.6
Present job carries higher level of economic advantages	1	8.3	12	41.4	13	31.7
Present job helps to achieve career objectives	6	50.0	6	20.7	12	29.3
Difficulty to find another job due to lack of educational qualifications	-	-	4	13.8	4	9.6
Other	1	8.3	5	17.2	6	14.6
Total	12	100	29	100	41	100

According to table 10, among the workers who wish, but do not want to change their jobs 31.7% of them cited the economic advantages of their present job. Most of the organizational structures do not emphasize their career plans. Instead, they focus much more on the salary and other financial benefits. In Sri Lanka, the wage structure of workers is not aligned with the cost of living. People have to struggle to manage their needs and wants with a low income. Therefore, workers tend to select jobs with higher salaries rather than their career match.

Not every one does so. There are workers who are following their career plans either consciously or unconsciously. Comparatively, 50.0% of managers and 29.3% laborers wish to retain in their present jobs because they believe that they can achieve their career objectives through it. They are the workers who search career happiness for their personal fulfillment.

b) Organizational interest and current place of work

Type of the organization in which someone likes to spend his working life is identified as organizational interest. It is an essential component of individual's career plan. When an employee works in an organization, which is preferred by him/her, he/she enjoys a greater level of career happiness. In the sample, most workers are employed in industries such as manufacture of Textiles & garments, (ISIC 32) and manufacture of Rubber products (ISIC 35).

Disputatively, correlation between organizational interest and place of work indicate a very poor relationship. Coefficient of correlation between organizational interest and the place of work is 0.11 (r_k : Spearman's Rank correlation method). The coefficient does not exhibit sound correlation between

these two variables. The relationship is very low. The poor relationship indicates that workers are working for industries, which are differing from their expected industries. They do not work for "what they really want to be".

The opinion about their organizational types by the workers proves that there is no proper match between organizational interests and place of work. According to Table 11, the organizational interest of most of workers (59.4%) is not aligned with their present organizational type. In the case of managers it seems that majority of them (78.3%) are working at their preferred places. But when it comes to laborers only 32.7% laborers are able to find their preferred organizational type. Collectively, interests of workers are not represented by their present organizational choices.

Table 11: Opinion of workers on their present organizational category

Intention	Managers		Laborers		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Preferred	8	34.8	6	5.4	14	10.5
Moderately preferred	10	43.5	30	27.3	40	30.1
Not preferred	5	21.7	74	67.3	79	59.4
Total	23	100	110	100	133	100

Among the workers who have planned to stay in the present organization, only 25.9% of them do so because they like to work in that type of organizations. Other 74.1% preferred to stay as the present organization is well established /reputed and as it has a growing trend with higher job security. Interestingly, 29.6% of workers have no idea about their loyalty to the present organizational type.

Indication of the above situation is that workers have low consideration for their organizational interests. Workers do not give priority for their organizational interests when they select jobs. The root cause is the lack of knowledge and understanding about career planning and its importance. Even though many of the workers are in their mid career life, some of them are still not certain about their interests, values, their internal demands.

Most workers consider material prosperity than the spiritual side. But when it comes to career happiness, the contribution by material success is insignificant when compared with spiritual aspects. This is backed by the living pattern of the Sri Lankan workers and also the cultural habits of them.

Workers who do not prefer their present organizational type provide the same reasons provided by workers who have not preferred their present organizations. Similarly the percentage of workers, who have not preferred present organizations because of the mismatch between their organizational interest and present organizational choice, is very low (21.5%). A higher rate of managers said that they are dissatisfied with their present organizational choices owing to the fact that this is not their preferred one. Laborers, who do not prefer to be with their present organizations, have not understood how important the organizational interest for their job satisfaction is. That is why they come up with reasons other than organizational interest for their dissatisfaction. The fact highlighted by the reasons provided is that the laborers are attracted to organizational categories due to flexible work schedules, more facilities and smooth working conditions whichever their organizational interests are.

Further more, the majority of workers do not prefer the functional area in which they are now functioning. In comparison, with regard to the managers, there is no such deviation between preferred career field and present career field. Unfortunately most laborers' present career fields are incompatible with their preferred career fields. Some 69.6% of managers preferred their present career field. But 79.1% of laborers do not prefer their functional areas even though a part of them likes to be in that organizational category. For instance, there were a number of working girls in the sample that are working for garment manufacturing factories currently. They preferred garment-producing organizations. Their preferred functional area is sewing. But many of them are doing something else such as ironing, packing and cutting. According to their comments, they have the ability to sew. But they are not offered their preferred career field within their preferred organizational context. A number of workers felt stagnated on their jobs by doing the routine tasks. They are tired of doing the same thing again and again especially things that they do not prefer to do. Neither the employee nor the employer is able to identify the interests, skills, values and abilities of the employee. As a result, on the one hand the employee is suffering from job dissatisfaction and on the other, the employer is suffering from poor job performance and lower productivity.

Conclusion

The study reveals that individual career planning undertaken by workers is not in a satisfactory level since the workers are not aware of the individual career planning and its importance. Their career plans do not follow their vocational self-concepts at their respective ages. In addition, vocational training and professional training carried out by persons is not linked with either labor market requirements or their vocational interests. The extent to which workers plan their careers differs among different occupational categories such as managers and laborers, educational levels and the ages. Career paths are not fully determined by them before entering jobs instead they make career decisions in an ad-hoc way.

Workers are not satisfied with their present employment. There is a very poor correlation between occupational interest workers and their present occupational choice. Workers are not working in their preferred organizational categories. Poor correlation between desired organizational type and present organizational type has resulted in workers' dissatisfaction in their jobs. Workers are unhappy about their present functions, as those functional areas are not their most preferred functional areas.

The study discloses that the root cause for workers job dissatisfaction is the lack of career happiness. It leads to increase the career mobility of workers whose often -shift from job to job is a search for a better career match. Job satisfaction is a major determinant of employees' productivity. Workers are productive only when they are doing what they really want. Findings of the study disclose that the job dissatisfaction is associated with the level of career planning by workers. Unplanned individual careers directly result in the increase of job dissatisfaction. Less attention paid by the workers to plan their careers is a major cause of this situation. The Sri Lankan education system does not provide any guidance to plan persons' future working life, thus they do not know how the individual career planning helps to solve their career related problems.

As a result, the Sri Lankan labor market is haunted by several problems especially the structured unemployment. Lack of jobs makes workers unable to keep on following career plans. Economic criteria such as the cost of living and inflation also create barriers to implement individual career plans. The present Sri Lankan cultural background also does not emphasize the importance of personal career happiness.

Today, organizations implement career development programs with the aim of developing employees' careers within the organizational hierarchical structure. Organizations only pay attention to improve effectiveness of career development programs. Individual career planning is the most important element of organizational career development programs. But organizations do not practice individual career development programs.

Career planning should receive attention of both employees and employers. As job satisfaction of employees is determined by the success of individual career planning, employees should give priority to career plans when they select a job. Moreover, the government should also keep much weight on providing career guidance services to those in need.

Improvement of workers job performance increases overall organizational productivity. By means of improved effectiveness and efficiency through employee motivation, one can achieve reduced hiring cost, cost of employee turnover, absenteeism and late attendance. Therefore Individual career planning is a powerful weapon to fire organizational inefficiency. Recruitment based on individual career planning will play a great role in increasing the relationship between organizational goals achievement and personal career fulfillment.

References

Clark, J. 2000. 'From Career Angst to Bliss; An Explorer's Tale' in *Career Planning and Adult Development Journal*, Vol. 15. No. 04: 92 – 103, California: Davies-Black Publishing.

Hall, D.T.1986. *Career in Organizations*, California: St. Monica Publication,

Harris, A.H.S. 2000. 'Using Adult Development Theory to facilitate Career Happiness' in *Career Planning and Adult Development Journal*, Vol. 15, No. 04: 27 – 36, Davies –Black Publishing.

Henderson, S.J. 2000. 'Career Happiness: More Fundamental than Job Satisfaction' in *Career Planning and Adult Development Journal*, Vol. 15, No. 04: 5 – 10, Davies-Black Publishing.

Henderson, S.J. 2000. 'Follow Your Bliss: A Process of Career Happiness' in *Journal of Counseling and Development*, Vol. 78, No. 03: 305 – 315, California: Ten Speed Press.

<http://vtaide.com/png/ERIC/life-work.htm>

<http://www.careernet.state.md.us/careertheory.htm>

<http://www.cete.org/acve/textonly/docgen.asp?tb1=digests&ID=104>

http://www.ericfacility.net/databases/ERITC_digests/ed421641.htm

Jung, S., Dolven, B., Dawson, C. & Saywell, T. 2000. 'Lured by the Net' in *Far Eastern Economic Review*, Vol. 163, No 19: 44 – 46, Hong Kong : Review Publishing Co. Ltd.

Keith, K., & McWilliams, A. 1999. 'The Returns to Mobility and Job Search by Gender' in *Industrial and Labor Relation Review*, Vol. 52: 275 – 288, California: Ten Speed Press.

Sterret, E.A. 1999. 'A Comparison of Women's and Men's Career Transition' in *Journal of Career Development*, Vol. 25, No.04: 249 – 259, California: Davies – Black Publishing.