

**IMPACT OF CAREER SEARCH SELF EFFICACY ON JOB SEARCH BEHAVIOUR****Dr. Arti Arun Kumar***Assistant Professor, Institute of Management, Christ University, Bangalore.***ABSTRACT**

*Job search behaviors occur across various contexts, involving diverse populations of job seekers searching for employment opportunities. In particular, individuals may search for their first jobs following a period of education, may seek reemployment following job loss, or may search for new opportunities while currently employed. Job search behavior attains greater significance especially in the IT industry which grew at the rate of 16.3% in the year 2011-2012 and promises to grow at the rate of 11-14 percent in 2012-13. IT/ITES sector alone is expected to create jobs to the tune of 227,328 jobs this year.*

*The paper aim to understand the variables such as self -efficacy which influence the job search behaviour of an IT sector employee. The total sample size consisted of 200 respondents having a minimum experience of 2 years collected through convenience sampling. Standardized questionnaires were used for this purpose.*

*The major findings of this study state that performance accomplishment does have a significant relationship on an individual's career search self - efficacy. This implies that past successes or failures has an effect on the individual present job exploration activities which includes networking and interviewing for jobs. However vicarious learning which is learning from experience of others do not have any relationship on the ability of an individual to perform job search related activities.*

*Based on the results, measures to improve their career search self- efficacy have also been suggested.*

**Keywords: Job Search Behaviours, Self Efficacy, IT Industry.**

India has emerged as the most optimistic nation in terms of hiring plans for the next three months following a dramatic turnaround in employer confidence after four consecutive quarters of relatively lack luster forecasts. According to the Manpower Employment Outlook Survey, 2013, the hiring pace for the upcoming quarter has rebound from, both last quarter and a year ago at this time. Employers expect robust hiring plans in all seven industry sectors and all four regions during the last quarter. The dramatic turnaround in employer confidence was largely due to recovery made by IT firms and allied companies. Moreover, there is a big opportunity for the e-commerce sectors to add more jobs to the labour market.

According to the Survey there are encouraging signs from many parts of the world, including evidence of economic stability in Europe, and steady job creation and unemployment at a four- year low in the US, helping to reduce some of the uncertainty that has clouded the global economic environment.

The above scenario would have an impact on the job search behavior of individuals. Job search behavior refers to identifying the existence of job opportunities and gathering more detailed information on selected job alternatives. (Barber, Daly, Giannantonio, and Phillips 1994). Job search behavior can be understood as the behavioral pattern of job seekers in their pursuit for a suitable job. Managers engage in job search for a variety of reasons such as to establish networks with powerful people or experts in the industry (Lucht, 1991). It could also be to demand better working conditions in the present workplace (Lazear, 1986). This becomes extremely relevant when pay structures and pay policies are determined by job evaluation not by market conditions for the skills that employees possess. Therefore job search behavior could serve as an indication that the market values their contribution at the level which justifies better employment conditions.

Job search behavior is an important research topic as whether it results in turnover or not it is costly because it absorbs time and energy which could obviously be put to better use. (March and Simon, 1958). It could also have

an impact on psychological processes which could have serious consequences in terms of withdrawal behavior and lack of commitment towards the job and organization. This has serious implications at the higher organizational levels as non performance at the higher levels will prove to costly than non performance at the lowest levels .(Hunter,Schmidt,& Judiesch, 1990).

Most of research done in the area of job search behavior can be organized with three dimensions (effort-intensity, content-direction, temporal-persistence), job search effort and intensity, job search strategies, preparatory and active job search behaviors, formal and informal job sources, specific job search behaviors, job search quality, job search dynamics, and job search persistence (Hoye 2013). Research shows that one of the factors that deal with job search activities is career search self-efficacy which is directly correlated with an individual 's belief in successfully dealing with job search activities (Wanberg et al. (1999).

Evidence points out that job seekers with low degrees of self-efficacy have lower level of job-search intensity and use less effective skills or ways in the job search process than those with high degrees of self-efficacy (Eden & Avirarn, 1993; Ellis & Taylor, 1983; Kanfer & Hulin, 1985; van Ryn & Vinokur, 1992).

Unemployed individuals with low extents of job-search self-efficacy are more likely to stop looking for new jobs than ones with high extents of job-search self efficacy.( Rife and Kilty,1991). Research suggests that both internal and external resources are important in determining the level and intensity of job search behaviors among unemployed individuals. Specifically, an external resource, social support, and an internal resource, self-efficacy, can have positive, facilitative effects on job search efforts. Results suggest that the effects of both social support and self-efficacy on job searches may be due to their impact on positive coping behaviors, which in turn are significantly related to increased search behaviors. This suggests that interventions meant to enhance self-efficacy and social support of job seekers may have positive effects on actively applying for jobs and on enlisting the help of others in finding jobs among African-Americans, as well as on the positive coping skills of the unemployed. Interventions should strive to increase these resources while simultaneously providing realistic expectations regarding the probability of finding a job well-suited for the job seeker. This argues for the potential effectiveness of individually formulated plans for securing employment.(Schaffer,.et.al.2012).However there are very few studies which explain the relationship between job search behavior and career self-efficacy particularly in the Indian context. The present study seeks to bridge this gap

## OBJECTIVES

1. To understand the variables which influence the job search process of an IT sector employee.
2. To understand the variables responsible for the development of career search self-efficacy.
3. To understand the relationship between job search process and career search self –efficacy.
4. To suggest measures based upon findings as to how individuals can improve their job-search self - efficacy thereby improving their chances at the job market.

## VARIABLES

### *Dependent variables*

Career search self-efficacy: Career search self -efficacy refers to an individual's ability to perform certain activities which includes exploration of career options, identification of values and interests, network with peers, interview for openings and so on. (Solberg, et al., 1995).Job search behaviors: Job search behavior refers to identifying the existence of job opportunities and gathering more detailed information on selected job alternatives. (Barber, Daly, Giannantonio, and Phillips 1994).

### *Independent variables*

Performance accomplishments: These are the past experiences which might have been successes or failures. These experiences help us to apply our intellect in similar situations in the future.

Vicarious learning: It is better known as learning from the experiences of others. It is facilitated when the individual is able to listen in on subject-matter experts when they discuss any topic of importance. It occurs by the process of observing the behavior of other people.

Verbal persuasion: This variable is used to measure the extent of encouragement and dis-encouragement received from family, friends, peers etc. in the quest for job search.

Emotional arousal of self-efficacy: The anxiety while searching for a job ( looking for job openings, taking professional help to improve soft skills, etc).

## **HYPOTHESES**

Hypothesis 1:

Ho: There is no relationship between performance accomplishment and an individual's career search self-efficacy.

H1: There is a relationship between performance accomplishment and an individual's career search self-efficacy

Hypothesis 2:

Ho: There is no relationship between vicarious learning and an individual's career search self-efficacy

H1: There is a relationship between vicarious learning and an individual's career search self-efficacy

Hypothesis 3:

Ho: There is no relationship between verbal persuasion and an individual's career search self-efficacy.

H1: There is a relationship between verbal persuasion and an individual's career search self-efficacy.

Hypothesis 4:

Ho: There is no relationship between emotional arousal of self-efficacy and an individual's career search self-efficacy.

H1: There is a relationship between emotional arousal of self-efficacy and an individual's career search self-efficacy.

Hypothesis 5:

Ho: There is no relationship between performance accomplishments and an individual's job search behaviour.

H1: There is a relationship between performance accomplishments and an individual's job search behaviour.

Hypothesis 6:

Ho: There is no relationship between vicarious learning and an individual's job search behaviour.

H1: There is a relationship between vicarious learning and an individual's job search behaviour.

Hypothesis 7:

Ho: There is no relationship between verbal persuasion and an individual's job search behaviour.

H1: There is a relationship between verbal persuasion and an individual's job search behaviour.

Hypothesis 8:

Ho: There is no relationship between emotional arousal of self-efficacy and an individual's job search behavior.

H1: There is a relationship between emotional arousal of self-efficacy and an individual's job search behavior.

## **SAMPLE AND SAMPLING TECHNIQUE**

The total sample size consisted of 200 IT professionals from the IT sector having a minimum experience of 2 years and presently working in Bangalore using convenience sampling.

## **SAMPLE DESCRIPTION**

In the sample 46% of the respondents were male, 54% female. In terms of age, 50.5% of the respondents were in the < 25 year age group, 49.5% of the respondents were in the age group 26 - 30 years. Since the target respondents were employees having work experience of 2 years, hence the responses were limited to only these two categories.

17.5% of the respondents polled held the position of an Assistant Engineer, 30% are Consultant, 33% are Business Analyst and 12% are Systems Analyst. Interestingly 5.5% of the respondents held the position of a trainee even after 2 years of work experience.

## **METHOD OF DATA COLLECTION**

Primary data was collected using a demographic information sheet. A standardized questionnaire was used to measure job search self- efficacy and job search behavior. Researchers (Chen, Lee, et al, 1995; Si & Cullen, 1998) suggest that a scale with even response categories can drastically decrease the chance of skewed and biased test results. So, the instruments in the present study are modified so that responses are given on a six-point Likert type (1= Strongly Disagree, 6= Strongly Agree) with the exception of the measures on frequency of job search behaviors.

Two scales developed by Blau (1994) to measure the initial and current job search efforts were utilised to measure job search behaviours. The alpha values were found to be reasonably high (.75) in previous reaserches namely Saks and Ashforth (1999) examined the relations among job search self-efficacy, perceived control over job search outcomes, job search behaviors, and employment status. The results proved that perceived control over job search outcomes has a positive correlation to initial job search behaviors (e.g., functional information gathering), but negatively related to both active job search behaviors and intensity.

Performance accomplishments: measured through a seven-item scale is constructed for the current study to measure perceived job search-related performance accomplishment. These Likert-type items are represented on a six-point continuum (1= Strongly Disagree, 6= Strongly Agree) with high scores indicating high levels of mastery of job search-related tasks.

Vicarious learning: Earlier researchers have attested the validity of this scale with adequate test-retest reliability ( $r = .78$ ) and good internal consistency having alpha coefficients ranging from .87 to .91. (Nauta & Kokaly, 2001).

Verbal persuasion: A modified version of the verbal persuasion subscale of Source of Math Efficacy Scale (SMES; Lent et al., 1991) is being used. The five items were presented on a six point continuum (1= Strongly Disagree, 6= Strongly Agree) .High scores indicated high levels of perceived verbal encouragement. The reliability score was found to be reasonably high ( $r = .91$ ). Internal consistency alpha coefficient was .74.

Emotional arousal: It consisted of 10 six-point Likert-type items (1= Not anxious at all, 6= Very anxious) with a high score indicating a high level of perceived anxiety. The 10 items were modified and taken from the Career Search Efficacy Scale (CSES; Solberg, et al., 1994).

## **PILOT TEST AND RELIABILITY OF THE INSTRUMENTS**

Initially pilot testing was done taking into consideration a sample size of 30. Cronbach alpha was calculated which indicated high consistency therefore the questionnaire could be administered to Indian population.

## **INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION**

The aim of the study was to examine the sources of the career search self-efficacy on employees in the IT industry. The study also attempted to investigate the effect of certain factors in relation to career search self-efficacy and job search behaviors. The influence of performance accomplishment, vicarious learning, verbal

persuasion, and emotional arousal of on career search self-efficacy and job search behaviors were studied through the techniques of correlation and regression.

**Table 1: Career search self-efficacy and performance accomplishment**

		job search efficacy	performance accomplishment
job search efficacy	Pearson Correlation	1	-.184**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.009
	N	200	200
performance accomplishment	Pearson Correlation	-.184**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.009	
	N	200	200

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 1 shows the correlation between career search self-efficacy and performance accomplishment. The Pearson Correlation value is -.184. Hence there is a relationship between career search self-efficacy and performance accomplishment. Since the value of the Pearson correlation value is negative, hence there exists a negative correlation. Thus if job search efficacy was found to be low, there is a high rate of performance accomplishment indicating an inverse relationship.

Also the significant value is .009 which is less than .05. Hence we reject null hypothesis. Therefore performance accomplishments have a significant relationship with an individual’s career search self-efficacy.

Table 2 shows the correlation between career search self -efficacy and vicarious learning. The Pearson Correlation value is 0.37. However the significant value is .600 which is more than .05. Hence we accept null hypothesis. Therefore career search self -efficacy does not have relationship with an individual’s vicarious learning. Thus an increase or decrease in self-efficacy cannot be attained by learning from other experiences

**Table 2: Career search self-efficacy and vicarious learning**

		job search efficacy	vicarious learning
job search efficacy	Pearson Correlation	1	.037
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.600
	N	200	200
vicarious learning	Pearson Correlation	.037	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.600	
	N	200	200

**Table 3 : Career search efficacy and verbal persuasion**

		career search efficacy	verbal persuasion
career search efficacy	Pearson Correlation	1	-.195**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.006
	N	200	200
verbal persuasion	Pearson Correlation	-.195**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.006	
	N	200	200

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 3 shows the correlation between career search self- efficacy and verbal persuasion. The Pearson Correlation value is -.195 which indicates a inverse relationship. Hence there is a relationship between career search efficacy and verbal persuasion.

Also the significant value is .006 which is less than .05. Hence we reject null hypothesis. Therefore career search efficacy have a significant inverse relationship with an individual’s verbal persuasion. Also 2.6% of the variance in the dependent variable is explained by independent variable i.e. verbal persuasion. This indicates that there is career self -efficacy is highly influenced by extent of encouragement or discouragement by family, friends, peers and professors in the quest for the job.

Table 4 shows the correlation between career search efficacy and emotional arousal. The Pearson Correlation value is .080.

Also the significant value is .263 which is more than .05. Hence we accept null hypothesis. Therefore career search efficacy does not have a significant relationship with an individual’s emotional arousal. So at least in the Indian population an individual anxiety has no impact on his belief in himself.

**Table 4: Career search self-efficacy and emotional arousal.**

		career search efficacy	emotional arousal
career search efficacy	Pearson Correlation	1	.080
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.263
	N	200	200
emotional arousal	Pearson Correlation	.080	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.263	
	N	200	200

**Table 5 : Job search Behaviour and Performance accomplishment**

		job search behaviour	performance accomplishment
job search behaviour	Pearson Correlation	1	-.088
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.216
	N	200	200
performance accomplishment	Pearson Correlation	-.088	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.216	
	N	200	200

Table 5 shows the correlation between job search behavior and performance accomplishment. The Pearson Correlation value is -.088. However the significant value is .216 which is more than .05. Hence we accept null hypothesis. Therefore performance accomplishments have no relationship with an individual’s career search behavior. Thus previous success and failures have no impact on individual job search behavior.

**Table 6: Job search Behaviour and Vicarious Learning**

		job search behaviour	vicarious learning
job search behaviour	Pearson Correlation	1	.158*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.025
	N	200	200
vicarious learning	Pearson Correlation	.158*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.025	
	N	200	200

Table 6 shows the correlation between job search behavior and vicarious learning. The Pearson Correlation value is .158. Hence there is a relationship between job search behavior and vicarious learning. Since the value of the Pearson correlation value is positive, hence there exists a direct relationship.

Also the significant value is .025 which is less than .05. Hence we reject null hypothesis. Therefore vicarious learning has a significant relationship with an individual’s job search behaviour. Also 5.6 % of the variance in the dependant variable is explained by the independent variable i.e. vicarious learning. So individuals tend to learn from others who are also looking out for the job.

Table 7 shows the correlation of .149 between job search behavior and verbal persuasion hence there is a relationship between job search behavior and verbal persuasion. Since the value of the Pearson correlation value is positive, hence there exists a positive correlation.

Also the significant value is 0.36 which is less than .05. Hence we reject null hypothesis. Therefore verbal persuasion has a significant relationship with an individual’s job search behaviour.

**Table 7 : Job search Behaviour and Verbal Persuasion**

		job search behaviour	verbal persuasion
job search behaviour	Pearson Correlation	1	.149*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.036
	N	200	200
verbal persuasion	Pearson Correlation	.149*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.036	
	N	200	200

**Table 8:Job search Behaviour and Emotional Arousal**

		job search behaviour	emotional arousal
job search behaviour	Pearson Correlation	1	.152*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.031
	N	200	200
emotional arousal	Pearson Correlation	.152*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.031	
	N	200	200

Table 8 shows the correlation between job search behavior and emotional arousal. The Pearson Correlation value is .152. Hence there is a relationship between job search behavior and emotional arousal. Since the value of the Pearson correlation value is positive, hence there exists a positive correlation.

Also the significant value is 0.31 which is less than .05. Hence we reject null hypothesis. Therefore emotional arousal has a significant relationship with an individual’s job search behaviour.

**IMPLICATIONS**

Job search behaviour of the job seeker depends on his learning from the experiences of others, extent of encouragement and discouragement received by the job seeker from family, friends, peers and professors in the quest for job search and also on the emotional anxiety faced by the individual.

In India, where the concept of joint family still exists, the study reinforces the popularly held belief that the views, opinions and encouragement by the individual’s family and relatives affect his or hers various job search behaviour. Also the anxiety created on the job seeker due to the societal pressures of finding a job also affects his job search behaviour.

However job exploration activities of an individual which includes networking and interviewing for jobs depends on the individual’s past successes or failures while looking for a job. If the individual was successful previously in



his career exploration activities then he would be motivated further to vigorously pursue different channels which would help him to land up his dream job.

Some of the suggested variables might include the demographic variables like age and gender and its relationship with performance accomplishment, vicarious learning, verbal persuasion, and emotional arousal of self-efficacy.

Also future studies in this field might also include other industries like manufacturing, automobile, infrastructure and so on.

Similar study can be conducted to understand what are the factors which affect the job search behavior and efficacy of senior and experienced professionals, preferably in the CXO positions.

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