

Religious leaders and their career expectations: an empirical study with pastors of evangelical communities.

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Abstract: The main goal of this study is to show the most present career anchors inside a team of religious leaders, in a geographically diverse area of Sao Paulo, Brazil, cross-referenced with their generations. The sample research was collected among pastors of one denomination from a geographically diverse area of Sao Paulo, and the subjects consist of generations X, Y and Z. The research group numbered 62 leaders of religious communities, all belonging to the Seventh-Day Adventist Church, with 100% response. The research was conducted from April until June of 2018, in which time the research subjects were brought to the auditorium of the maintaining organization, where they filled out a questionnaire on paper, and proceeded to have their results cataloged and analyzed. The research included only male subjects, a peculiarity of the subject class in this institution, and included analysis by time of service. Such analysis is categorized descriptive-analytical and was drawn primarily from a closed questionnaire that contained forty questions. It is vital to review each of these Career Anchors deriving of each generation, as well as if there is difference within the times of service, because that may contribute for a better understanding of the career developments, and can also result in better interaction between leaders and workers.

Key-words: Career, Generations, Career Anchors, Religious Leadership, Church, Evangelical Pastors.

Date of Submission: 15-06-2018

Date of acceptance: 02-07-2018

I. INTRODUCTION:

This article aims to understand which values and beliefs are rooted in the profile of religious leaders of evangelical communities. It is our understanding that there are different factors that influence the decision for a career, such as personal or cultural values, family history, career expectations, etc. (Martins, 2001, p70-72). For Schein (1993) Career Anchors refer to the set of self-perception of your talents, motivation and necessities, attitudes, and values that one has regarding the work they develop or wish to develop. As such, career anchors affect the way each individual sees his own work and career.

For Martins (2001) the career decisions are directed by a system of perception one has about oneself, meaning the way they see themselves, how much they know about themselves, their values, skills and motivations, these are the deciding factors in regard to making choices. In every professional or work decision, they gather new knowledge and abilities, that allow some change in their attitude, towards personal and professional life. Dutra (1996) cites that a career can be seen as a path, on which an individual walks towards the desired goal. In other words, in order to build a career it is necessary to consider both the resolutions of the individual, as well as the organization's.

For this reason, this study aims to identify the influence of the Career Anchors of Edgar Schein over the choices of career of this research group, and how they guided their personal and professional development. It was also established which career expectations related to each generation of religious leader, considering time of service within the organization, as well as the higher and lowered scored anchors. In order to arrive at such conclusions, the inventory of Career Anchors of Schein, with forty "closed" questions was applied to a group of 62 individuals.

II. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

2.1 Definition of Career

According to Arthur, Hall and Lawrence (1989), career is the "sequence of professional experiences, in which the work has influence over the way people see and interact with other people, with organizations and in society". However Baruch and Rosenstein (1992, p. 478) define career as "a process of development of the employee as a path of experiences and works in one or more organizations", while Hirsh and Jackson (2014) defend that career is connected to the feeling of progress in our professional life. They affirm that most

individuals when building or defining their career, observe what they would like to accomplish, and from that desire, they draw the path to get there.

To Oswaldo (2015) the word career comprises several meanings, and can be considered the professional and individual journey that permeates the occupations and professions they face. For this author, career alludes to the decision processes made throughout life – which include self-discovery and self-fulfillment.

Hirsch and Jackson (2014) affirm that the term career can be considered by many as intimidating, and suggests that it is easier to think about career as a sequence of experiences, and that these experiences can include going into a different area of the organization, change of employer and even a different activity.

For many classic authors the concept of career has always been connected to a high level of compromise and development at work. It was thought that the constant search for professional evolution was characteristic of few individuals and that only they would have a well-constructed career. Thenceforth we can understand the reason of so many conflicts (SANTOS, FERNANDES, MANTOVANI, 2016). It is further verified that the liquid modernity has exercised great influence over individuals, and that even families are immersed in the managerial standard, where families themselves are responsible for creating and developing productive individuals with high rate of employability. (OLTRAMARI, FRIEDERICHS, REMOR, 2013).

Cortella (2016) relates that currently in the scope of work, the questions have been rising regarding purposes and values of individuals. He mentions that a good number of people wishes to find a work that outweighs simply monetary compensation, because there is a pursuit for recognition and value of the work performed. Individuals do not wish their efforts to be wasted in such a way that they themselves would be considered of no use (CORTELLA 2016). To the contrary of what has happened until recently, simply surviving isn't enough. More than a livelihood, people want to leave a legacy, to build something satisfactory, and besides that, they want to feel they belong to something, that meets their beliefs and what they stand for.

Nowadays what occupies one's mind, is not only doing something, but knowing what they are doing. According to Cortella (2016) work is not only a job where one does what one is told. One needs to understand the purpose of their activity, and thus become conscientious. As a result there is no more place for alienation – a concept that refers to everything I produce without understanding the reason, in other words, it is only a tool through which things come to be, but not a decision over the destiny of my contribution. The discomfort that this alienation causes, resulted in and collective change in behavior, which in return affected individuals and made their range of values more significant (CORTELLA 2016).

In the field of philosophy according to Cortella (2016) there is a classic formula in which work can be synthesized as a conscious transforming action. He ponders that while all animals have actions, some may even have transforming actions, but only humans can consciously act for transformation, and this is what makes individuals build and establish their values, and therefore a set of individual values can influence the values of an organization.

In these respects, it is important to understand that the individuals make the work just as much as the work makes the individuals, to the same degree as the work can transform us and mold our abilities and competencies, playing a fundamental role in our values. As Michelangelo would say “Every painter paints himself” (CORTELLA 2016).

2.2 Career in a Traditional Religious Organization

The biblical view that nourishes the career model of the SDA leader, points to the career of the religious leader primarily linked to moral values, that can be exemplified as a high standard behavior. The writer Paul affirms: “Here is a trustworthy saying: Whoever aspires to be an overseer desires a noble task. Now the overseer is to be above reproach, faithful to his wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him, and he must do so in a manner worthy of full respect. If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God's church? He must not be a recent convert, or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil. He must also have a good reputation with outsiders, so that he will not fall into disgrace and into the devil's trap. In the same way, deacons are to be worthy of respect, sincere, not indulging in much wine, and not pursuing dishonest gain” (I Timothy 3:1-8).

At the same time, career takes place in a context of a calling. Again, the apostle Paul justifies his career saying himself is an apostle—sent not from men nor by a man, but by Jesus Christ and God the Father (Galatians 1:1). The same principle is observed by Jesus Christ when He says “you did not choose me, but I chose you” (John 15:16), as He personally called his team of workers (Matthew 4:18-22; Mark 1:14-20; Luke 5:1-11).

In the biblical context, the career of the religious leader happens as a result of abdication of other careers, which restrains you from acting in other work fronts or companies. The religious conviction of the individual, prevents him from roaming other denominations that have different beliefs. This concept is seen in Matthew 19:27 during an episode where the apostle Peter asks Jesus the following: “we have left everything to

follow you! What then will there be for us?” Regarding a long-term career, the same apostle asks Christ in John 6:68 saying “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.”

At the same time that Paul predicts the possibility to act in different areas (“ministries”) according to each different ability (“gift”) and its place in the ecclesiastical work (I Corinthians 12:4-12), he also argues that there should also be a combined catalyzer where all interests and expectations must give in to. This is evident on verse 6 of the aforementioned text which says: “There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God’s work.” In times of organization, it is believed biblically that the moderating action of God happened through a collegiate of elected leaders, that would gather to deliberate upon the actions of the workers. Such groups have social authority, and before such deliberations each worker must submit his own expectations or desires to evolve in his career, for the greater interest of the community. This ecclesiastical authority possesses, if necessary, power to reprimand and discipline. One example can be seen in Acts 15:37-40: “Barnabas wanted to take John, also called Mark, with them, but Paul did not think it wise to take him, because he had deserted them in Pamphylia and had not continued with them in the work. They had such a sharp disagreement that they parted company. Barnabas took Mark and sailed for Cyprus, but Paul chose Silas and left, commended by the believers to the grace of the Lord”.

According to this concept, setting of the Seventh Day Adventist Church, in its Administrative Ecclesiastical Regulations, the institution establishes that the pastor must have ministerial vocation, exercise it with exclusivity, and abdicate other professions. Each one signs a “Conflict of Interest” form as well as a “Full-time Commitment” when entering the system, which renders him disqualified to exercise a career any other place on the job market (Regulations E85 S and E90).

2.3 Definition of Generations

The term generations characterizes a group of individuals that were born within the same chronological period and experienced the same political, social, cultural and historical events. As such, these individuals tend to have similar readings and interpretations and share similar experiences, that build a common collective conscience (ITUASSU *et al.*, 2016). The word “generation” has a range of meanings even more important than simply its own connotation. A generation is not formed only by people that were born during the same timeframe, but by people who were shaped by a certain period or year, and by a similar type of political or cultural influence. Such experiences in common, link them to a similar feeling, that of belonging to a determined generation (FORQUIN, 2003).

We opted for using the classifications of generations contained in Veloso, Dutra and Nakata (2008). According to the authors, generations are comprised in Y, X and *baby boomers*, and their characteristics are as follows:

- Until 1964: baby boomers – they are motivated, optimistic and workaholic. They value status and professional growth within the company.
- Between 1965 and 1977: generation X – adopted a posture of skepticism, they defend a more informal work environment and less rigorous hierarchy.
- From 1978 and on: generation Y – they are more individualistic, defend opinions and prioritize personal relations as opposed to professional questions. Generation Y is also characterized by constant change, need for interactivity, ample access to information and understanding of the world that makes them be and act different within the society (LOMBARDIA *et al.*, 2008, TAPSCOTT, 2010, COIMBRA, SCHIKMANN, 2001).
- Generation Z also researched, is the generation born from 1998 and on. They are super connected and can’t turn off their cellphones and tablets. They are dynamic, innovators, breathe technology, have highly critical spirit, are distracted, have low degree of interpersonal relations, tend towards obsolescence, and are impatient (TAPSCOTT, 2010).

2.4 Career Anchors of Edgar Schein

The reasons and standards that help individuals choose and determine their careers, lay on the self-perceptions of their principles and values (VIEIRA, CAREERI, *et al.*, 2016). These preferences for choices of one determined occupation, career and opportunity, result in what Schein has called Career Anchors (1996). From his studies based on interviews of forty four individuals, at that time students at *Sloan School of Management* and later on (within an interval of 10 to 12 years) he concluded that as the individual progresses through the various stages of his career, he gradually acquires self-awareness and develops a perception of his career path more clearly. The changes in these research subjects were more detailly observed, and as a result, their conclusion comprised reasons, attributions, values and attitudes that composed the profile of the subjects (TREVISAN, *et al.*, 2016). This study allowed the researcher to determine characteristics of each anchor, as well as the profile of the professional, and the perspective of those around. (VIEIRA, *et al.*, 2016).

Schein (2016) describes the self-concept as “Career Anchors”, which are based in three characteristics:

- Talents and abilities, demonstrated in the success of several tasks performed;

- Reasons and necessities, noted on the feedback of others around them and the company, and self-evaluation when facing multiple challenges;
- Attitudes and values, as evidenced during conflict between personal values and occupation or organization values.

Edgar Schein found in the anchor an appropriate metaphor to remind the premise of comfort, convenience and adjustment, portrayed by the individual's tendency to go back to practices that are similar to his self-image. This mainly takes place when such individual experiences situations that go against their values and goals (TREVISAN, *et al.*, 2016).

Schein (1996) primarily described five career anchors, based on data collected during his studies (1978), such as: 1) Autonomy/Independence (AU); 2) Security/Stability (SS); 3) Technical/Functional Competence (TF); 4) General Managerial Competence (GM) and 5) Entrepreneurial Creativity (EC). However, in later researches in the 1980's, he added three more categories, which are: 6) Service/Dedication to a Cause (SV); 7) Pure Challenge (CH), and 8) Life Style (LS).

For Schein (1996), knowing these anchors can help the individual make wiser choices, pertaining to his self-development, family and career. The characteristics of each career anchor are described as follows:

- Autonomy/Independence (AU): describes individuals that put the highest priority on maintaining his freedom, autonomy and independence. They tend to draw the map of their professional lives focusing on activities that allow more flexibility when facing the need to accomplish personal goals, according to their own rules and methods.
- Security/Stability (SE): describes individuals that guide their professional path prioritizing financial stability and employment security. They tend to work in companies that offer tenure, a good benefit package, and companies whose image inspires solidness and reliability.
- Technical/Functional Competence (TF): individuals that are stimulated and motivated when exerting a specific skill, and become specialists in that function or activity, or knowledgeable in the field where his competencies and satisfactions lay.
- General Managerial Competence (GM): individuals with analytical capacities, good interpersonal and intergroup skills, and emotional balance fit into this anchor. To them is designated decision making, and so, they should think in an integrated manner, considering the multiple functions they embrace. They feel accomplished in management, they know how to manage people and understand all areas of an organization, even if superficially.
- Entrepreneurial Creativity (EC): individuals that constantly seek the creation of new enterprises will fit in this type of anchor. They possess an impulse for creativity which boosts them to design new companies, products and services that are economically independent and profitable, as well as identification with the entrepreneurs themselves.
- Service/Dedication to a Cause (SV): attracts individuals interested in helping others and building a better society. For this reason they look for a job in organizations where they can exert influence while at the same time, their personal values are respected.
- Pure Challenge (CH): individuals within this category career anchor plan their professional lives in a way that allows them to constantly face obstacles to be overcome. As the number of overcome challenges grows, so does the search for new obstacles to be solved. It is not uncommon for people to react positively to a few challenges in life, but for them whose anchor is "pure challenge", nothing beyond that will matter as much.
- Life Style (LS): brings great interest in the people who prioritize in their profession, the integration between work and their personal and family needs.

There is great value in the studies and researches of Edgar Schein, as when the career anchor is not well defined and clear to the individual, he runs the risk of working on activities and jobs that will not bring him fulfillment and satisfaction. If they don't clearly understand this concept, they may realize that the activities he performs are not in agreement with his desires and personal inclinations, and therefore, will not be happy. In this respect, the clarity as to your personal orientation towards work is even more important, helping you recognize and acknowledge your values and principles (TREVISAN, *et al.*, 2016).

With respect to proximity of certain anchors, Schein (1996) realized that in determined professionals there is a greater disposition towards accepting closer bonds with the organization, than those whose professional anchors are different. This bond is named by Schein "Golden Handcuffs", which refers to a package of benefits with no professional portability (GOMES, *et al.*, 2012).

Finally he concludes that most individuals create a strong self-concept of their internal career, in a way that while identifying the most predominant anchor, it will reveal the values which he will not renounce, even when facing troubling decisions (CANTARELLI, ESTIVALETE, ANDRADE 2014).

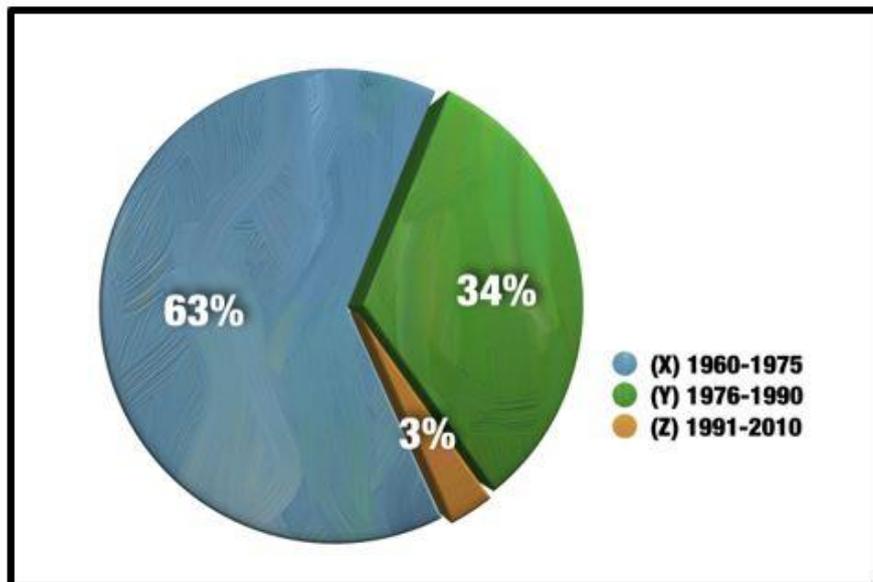
III. METHOD OF RESEARCH

This research uses the descriptive-analytical method (TRIVIÑOS, 1987, YIN 2001), that aims to discuss and identify which career anchors are more and less present in each generation of research subjects. The research tool we opted to use was a questionnaire that we named Schein's Inventory of Career Anchors (1993), made up of forty questions with the purpose of identifying the most present career anchors as well as the ones that are less present; within the eight categories of questions we added one that identified to which generation the individual belongs. For the collection of the data, the questionnaire was given to 62 individuals, and this sample showed most participants (63% of the total) were born starting in 1960, thus belonging to generation "X". the application of the questionnaire happened on 03/06/2018 during a meeting of the planning board, which the research subjects were attending due to it's agenda being related to their professional activity. They received the paper questionnaire and were directed as to how to fill them out, which they did, within the 30 minutes they were given. To all participants it was assured confidentiality when dealing with such data, as well as the presentation of the results. The data was then collected and organized on an Excel spreadsheet, and then transformed into tables and graphics.

IV. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS

Graphic 01 presents data relating to the generation of the research subjects, identifying in which period they were born and its relative distribution.

Graphic 01 – Generation Study of the research subjects

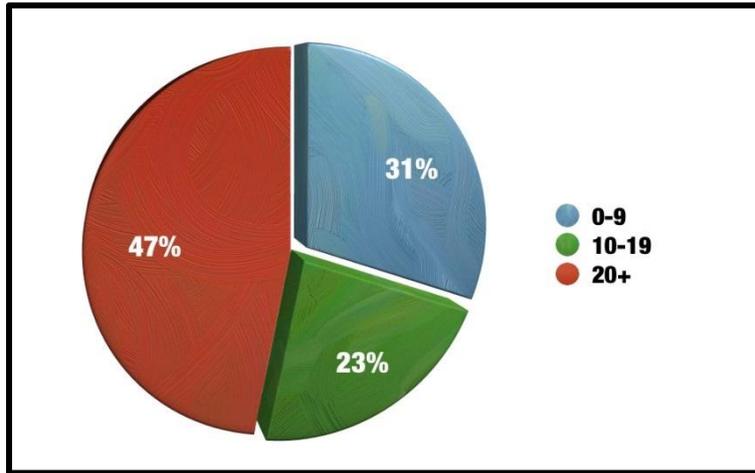


Source: research data.

It is noted that the great majority, 63% of the total, belong to the aforementioned Generation "X", which means those who were born between 1965 and 1977. Next we note that 34% of subjects belong to Generation "Y", born between the years of 1976 to 1990, and last the less expressive percentage of 3% corresponds to Generation "Z".

According to Veloso, Dutra and Nakata (1998) the "Xs" are individuals that express their preference for informal environments, they also prefer a less rigorous and more flexible hierarchy, and appreciate interaction with other professionals that can add value to their development. We should also note that the "Xs" are that generation that came right after a period of war, and so they inherited aspects connected to militarism, mostly in regards to respect and obedience to rules.

Graphic 02 – Research subjects divided by time of service in the organization

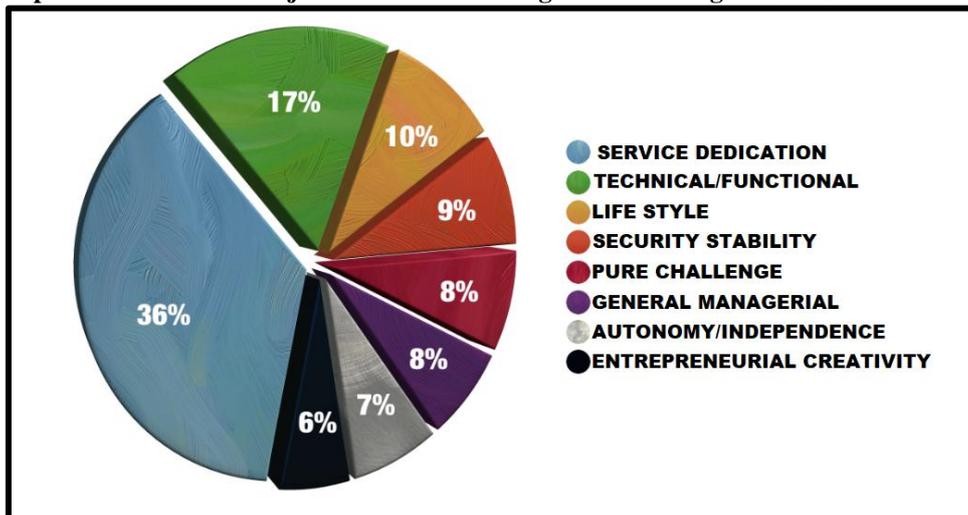


Source: research data.

Graphic 02 shows that the great majority of the research subjects (47%) have been working for this organization for at least 20 years. Next we can observe that 31% of the subjects are involved in this particular organization for 0 to 9 years, and the remaining 23% of the research subjects have been with this organization for 10 to 19 years.

We can re-assume the perception of Arthur, Hall and Lawrence (1989) that affirms that the professional career is seen as a sequence of professional experiences. On the other hand, Hirsh and Jackson (2014) understand career as a progress in the professional life, and Cortella (2016) raises the point that currently individuals search for careers that offer more than a monetary compensation, they search for respectable activities that adds to a life of purpose.

Graphic 03 –Research subjects divided according to the most significant Career Anchor



Source: research data

The third graphic allows for a peculiar reading of the CareerAnchors with greater presence within the research subjects. The results show that the most present Career Anchor in a greater rate amongst the religious leaders, was *Service Dedication to a Cause (SV)*, which according to Schein (1996), defines individuals that wish to align their professional goals with a noble and meaningful cause. This anchor was the most present, for 36% of the research subjects.

According to Martins, (2001) the decisions that direct a career are based on the perception one has about oneself. To him, careers are oriented based on personal values and beliefs. Cortella (2016) emphasizes that the efforts of the modern individual are centered in building his legacy. He has a strong sense of belonging and works in such a way that his efforts are not wasted. It can also be said that nowadays the process of building a career focuses on seeing the physical labor as a transforming action, where individuals strive to have their professional efforts collaborating with the development of the community and therefore, their society (CORTELLA, 2016).

V. FINAL OBSERVATIONS

As the general sense, it was observed that the most present career anchor was *Service Dedication*, which was present in 36% of the religious leaders that were interviewed. It can also be observed among the subjects, that most of them have been with the organization for at least 20 years, or more, which stresses the similarities with the philosophy and purpose of the researched institution. The presence of Generation “X” was also very noticeable amongst the research subjects. They can be identified by their peculiar serious manner, loyal to leadership and a bit more bureaucratic. Therefore we conclude that the anchor *Service Dedication* is the one that has guided many of the religious leaders, and it is further understood that this anchor identifies individuals that strive to leave a legacy to their communities and therefore to society. Through the data collected we were able to observe that the factors age or generation, do not interfere with the range of values and beliefs of those that choose to build a religious career, and therefore, the will to do good for those around them, and the desire to act in a transforming way are the aspects that drive the religious leaders.

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IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science (IOSR-JHSS) is UGC approved Journal with Sl. No. 5070, Journal no. 49323.

Oliveiros "Religious leaders and their career expectations: an empirical study with pastors of evangelical communities." IOSR Journal Of Humanities And Social Science (IOSR-JHSS). vol. 23 no. 06, 2018, pp. 01-08.