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Article

Protean and Boundaryless Career Attitudes as Antecedents of Organizational Commitment—Evidence from the Indian IT Industry

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Abstract: Protean and boundaryless careers have emerged as new ways of handling careers in organizations. This concept is gaining a significant place in career studies. In line with this, the current study examines the relationship between the underlying dimensions of protean (self-direction and value-driven), boundaryless (boundaryless mindset (BM)) and mobility preference (MP) career attitudes and organizational commitment (OC) (affective, normative and continuance). Organizational commitment is important for all kinds of organizations. For data collection, 600 IT professionals employed in different organizations in the Delhi-NCR region of India were approached. Descriptive statistics, correlation and structural equation modeling (SEM) were utilized to validate the research outcomes and test hypotheses. Prior literature studies focusing on the effects of protean and boundaryless career attitudes on organizational commitment have not been much explored. The current study suggests that mobility preference has a significant contribution towards individuals' continued commitment to the employing organization. Other variables assert an insignificant relationship with organizational commitment. These results demonstrate how decision-makers and managers should proceed to design a blueprint for the education of employees in conjunction with the underlying dimensions of protean, boundaryless and mobility preferences, career attitudes and organizational commitment (OC).

Keywords: career; protean career; boundaryless career; organizational commitment; career development; talent retention; R; SEM



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1. Introduction

The idea of career management may have different meanings for employees. However, earlier employees generally preferred linear career paths with well-defined trajectories planned by their employers. This idea of organization-driven career management was widespread before 1991, before the liberalization, privatization and globalization (LPG) reforms. Globally, planned career growth managed by organizations started with the advent of the industrial revolution and became popular until the IT revolution Ref. [1]. Nowadays, linear and well-defined career paths are not very well taken by the young workforce. The younger generation is experimenting with novel possibilities in their careers by trying new job roles. For the new generation, jobs are not only a source of earning and stability but also inspiration, motivation and self-achievement. Young individuals are willing to sacrifice their time and money for a new and exciting change in their careers [2]. The term “career” is undergoing continuous evolution. Individuals are now motivated to take charge of their own careers and accept responsibility for their own successes and failures. Most employees today are also value-conscious and ethical and they will occasionally challenge their employers for wrongdoing. These aspects are elucidated with the help of the concept

of protean career orientation [3]. A pertinent attribute of such a protean career orientation is physical and psychological mobility [4–7].

These conceptualizations related to career management are gaining popularity among researchers as well as practitioners. Accordingly, managing young people is a challenging task for human resource managers.

Young professionals are more vulnerable when making career decisions. There is a lack of empirical evidence on how young professionals' boundaryless career orientations influence their career choices and decision-making [8]. India has the youngest workforce, making India an intriguing context for studying the boundaryless career orientation. Henceforth, India has the world's youngest workforce, making it an intriguing context for exploring boundaryless career orientation [9]. The emergence of protean career patterns and the decline of bounded organizational careers have paved the path for a novel career approach, i.e., protean career and boundaryless career [10–15].

The term “protean” derives from the Greek divinity “Proteus,” who possesses the ability to transform at will [11,14]. Thus, it can be concluded that protean employees prioritize individual freedom, self-growth and autonomy. The new career approach has features including non-linearity and employees taking responsibility for career progressions [11,15]. The new career approach reflects the transformations in the psychological contract. Ref. [16] conceptualization of a “protean” career refers to managing one's own career; Hall first introduced the concept in 1976. Nevertheless, it did not gain significance until the 1980s [17]. Moreover, the concept got its origin way back in 1930 at the Chicago School of Sociologists, whereby they developed a “life-history” approximation of a career. Movement in the workplace includes moving within the same workplace or to a different destination, which is included under geographical mobility [18]. Researchers in the management domain have generated much curiosity about protean careers [18]. Another career pattern is the boundaryless career, which depicts a self-governing career path surpassing a single employment setting's boundary. A boundaryless career approach comprehends both mental flexibility within and between an employee's organization and actual movement across the organizational periphery [15,19–22]. The organization's amendments have forced employees to deal with abrasiveness both within the organization and between employers [23]. As a result, there is a crunch in jobs and a distortion in professional planning. This has led to an essential transformation in employment objectives from a “bounded” to a “boundaryless” career, highlighting uncertainty and flexibility [12].

India has a vast workforce, including an emerging large IT sector. India supplies its workforce to offshore companies in the USA and Australia [24–26]. Studying how a boundaryless career orientation can shape employee behavior in the IT sector in India can offer valuable insights to researchers and practitioners [27]. This study provides a framework and tests it in the context of the IT sector in India. The IT sector has increasingly contributed to India's growth by inventing, reinventing and transforming itself in a short span of time [28]. India is the world's biggest IT manufacturing destination, with 7.5% of the nation's gross domestic product (GDP) [29].

Furthermore, it has not only stabilized regional growth, but it has also mobilized the numerous human resources in the country [30]. For the past two decades, the Indian IT sector has shown a growth rate of around 35% every year and it is still growing. Considering the importance of the IT sector on the growth of the Indian economy, there is a need for organizations in the IT sector to comprehend the implications of organizational commitment. Indian organizations must look into what impacts employees' organizational commitment [31]. The most significant problem facing the Indian IT industry is the rising attrition rate [32]. Thus, Indian organizations must look into what impacts employees' organizational commitment [31]. Subsequently, the IT industry relies heavily on human resources and its overall performance is directly related to a balanced approach between demand and supply of IT professionals [33,34], retaining such professionals has become increasingly complicated.

Hence, with the passage of time, the Indian IT sector has learned the fact that talent retention is supreme in a situation where employees are no longer aspiring for long-term association [35]. From an academic research point of view, various predictors of organizational commitment have been widely studied in the Indian context. Some examples are managerial support and work–life balance [36], managerial communication and job satisfaction [37], training [38] and employee engagement [39]. The present work attempts to fill this void. Ref. [40] claimed that much of the work on careers takes place in the USA, Australia and the UK. As a result, there is room for western models as well. With the altering career landscape, employees have embraced a protean career orientation [41].

However, the novelty and significance of this study are to identify the relationship between the underlying dimensions of protean (self-direction and value-driven), boundaryless mindset (BM) and new dependent variables such as mobility preference (MP), career attitudes and organizational commitment (OC) (affective, normative and continuing), which in the previous study were not taken into consideration. A further distinction of this investigation compared to prior studies is the advantage of research focusing not only on “one or two aspects of the organization,” but also on “numerous perspectives” that can help employees and organizations effectively align and adhere to their career development and market preferences. Moreover, the importance and difference between this research and previous ones lie in the requirement to analyze unemployment within the framework of not only Indian organizations, but also globally, where career development theories necessitate that employees who satisfy these orientations be managed in a particular style.

There is a gap connected to the unexplored protean and boundaryless career domain and other associated paradigms [7–42]. Career exploration that spreads across various western and non-western countries has presented insights that further explain the applications and validity of career models [41]. The present work also enhances the literature related to protean and boundaryless career approaches by connecting these concepts with [43] a multi-dimensional model of organizational commitment. The current study links the two career attitude variables with different organizational commitment dimensions. Although some studies on the boundaryless career orientation have been conducted in the context of western countries, the application of such concepts in the context of South Asian countries is limited. Specifically, in countries like India, where collectivism is higher than in western societies, studying the boundaryless career orientation can substantially contribute to the body of existing literature. The purpose of this study is to assess the effect of the protean career orientation and boundaryless career on organizational commitment. This study has significance in that it provides a framework and tests hypotheses in the context of the IT sector in India. Today, paradigm shifts are happening and influencing career orientations among employees. The purpose of this study is to investigate the influence of the protean career orientation and boundaryless career orientation on organizational commitment. The protean career orientation includes a self-directed and value-driven attitude, whereas the boundaryless career includes a boundaryless mindset and mobility preference. Organizational commitment includes affective commitment, continuance and normative commitment. This study has explored the relationship among these variables.

The further part of this study has been structured as follows: The next section discusses the conceptual framework and literature review. The following section deals with the development of the hypothesis. Section four is about the research methodology, followed by the data analysis, findings and discussion. The implications of the study and the conclusion are discussed in the last section of the paper.

1.1. Literature Review and Conceptual Framework

A protean career is defined as “frequent change and self-invention, autonomy and self-direction driven by the needs of the person rather than the organization” [44]. It is explained as an individual’s career patterns that are composed of components, namely, value-driven predispositions and self-directed predispositions. Ref. [45] described value-driven attitudes as the “degree of individual self-internal values and their yardstick to

measure specified career goals” [46]. Another dimension, self-directedness, describes an individual’s adaptation towards self-directed career management. Internal values propel individual behavior. Under such circumstances, the individual identifies their career demands on a continuous basis [46]. This is how an individual, not the employer, is responsible for their career progression [47].

Self-directed individuals are proactive in dealing with their career paths, such that they upgrade their proficiencies [48], which supports them in becoming employable. Thus, a protean career attitude reflects individual activities undertaken in a career context [45]. The boundaryless career comprises two dimensions: physical mobility and psychological mobility [21,48,49]. Physical mobility signifies the movement of an individual across different job boundaries, occupations, organizations and nations [21]. It is believed that an individual might wish to remain with one employer or change jobs. Employees who have gained experience with diverse organizations do not find it exciting to be associated with one organization for a long duration. It is always advantageous to look for job opportunities outside an organization rather than staying in the same company where they are well known [21]. Another dimension of the boundaryless career is the psychological mobility dimension, which defines the boundaries that dominate the career actor’s mindset, but do not cross physically. On the other hand, psychological mobility denotes networking, connection and exploring novel opportunities that are valuable. Both protean and boundaryless careers might seem like similar concepts, but they possess subtle differences.

Ref. [49] outlined that the two career orientations are associated with different career stages and mobility preferences. Using factor analysis, [46] demonstrated that protean and boundaryless careers are two distinct dimensions. These authors showed that managers who are perceived to exhibit protean career attitudes might not exhibit mobility simultaneously, which is associated with a boundaryless career. The present study also maintains this distinction between these two career attitudes in correspondence with the above findings. The current study applied the model proposed by [50] for organizational commitment. It is interpreted as “a force that binds an individual to a course of action that is of relevance to one or more targets. Ref. [51] defined organizational commitment as a stage in which the employee recognizes a certain group with specific goals and hopes to maintain their status as a group member.

The model indicated the multi-faceted role of organizational commitment, establishing three different dimensions: the desire to be part of the organization (affective commitment), the obligation to remain (normative commitment) and the apparent cost of leaving (continuance commitment) [51]. Accordingly, continued commitment is imperative, as the Indian IT sector should be highly competitive. Consequently, individuals might commit to the organization just because the cost of leaving an organization in terms of status, monetary rewards and professional relationships will be high. In this context, affective and normative commitment exist because of the HR policies of an organization [52–54]. Available literature has provided ample evidence that organizationally committed employees display improved job efficiency and improved organizational financial conditions [55].

1.2. Theory and Hypothesis Formation

Protean and Boundaryless Career Attitudes in Relation to Organizational Commitment

As per the regulatory focus theory, there exists an association between organizational commitment and protean and boundaryless career attitudes [48]. According to Higgins (1998), this theory also posits that individuals with self-regulation along with robust principles versus strong ought (i.e., what other individuals contemplate for us) differ in directions. Ideally, self-regulation encompasses elevation in career, which indicates progression, growth, development and achievements [51]. On the other hand, self-regulation includes a prevention focus [48]. In addition, regulatory focus has effects on an individual’s perception of their goals and this, in turn, influences their career behavior towards career paths. Ref. [48] commented that individuals who work towards the attainment of their goals show a promotion focus, while individuals who do the bare minimum to remain

safe show a prevention focus. In addition, [43] argued that organizational commitment influences goal regulation and individuals with stronger affective commitment exhibit greater intrinsic motivation, whereas an individual with a more substantial continuance commitment shows elevated external motivation. Therefore, the following hypotheses are formulated and purposed as a model (Figure 1).

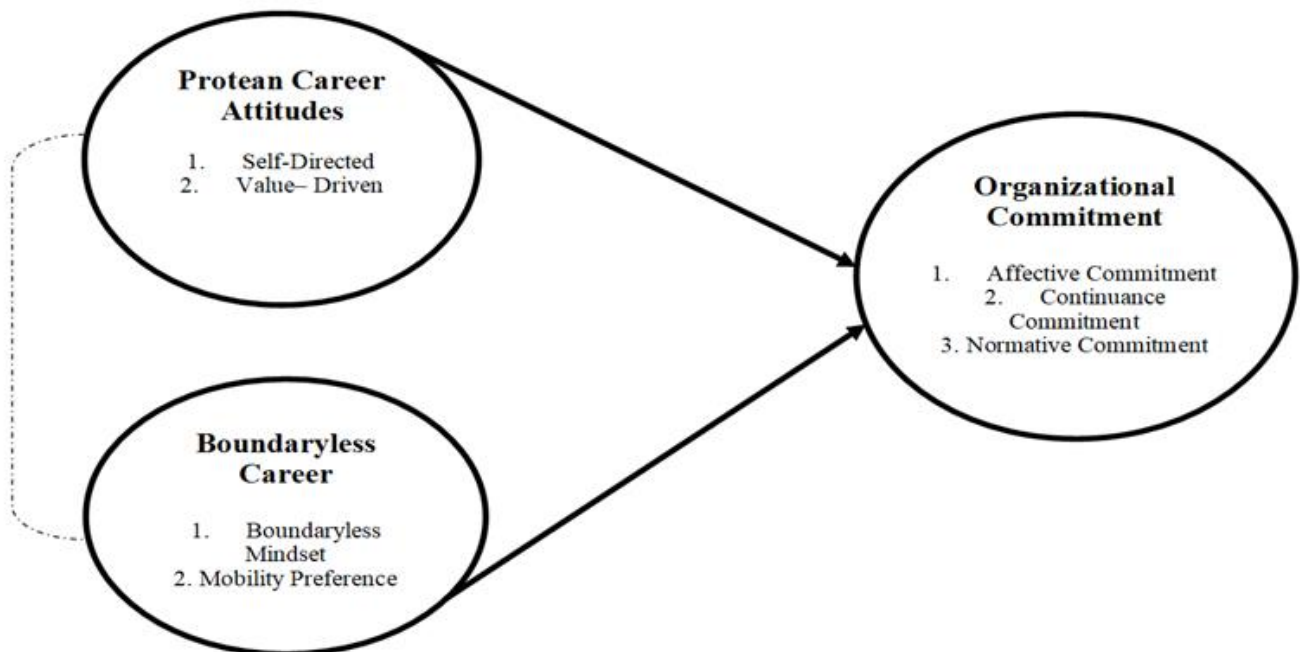


Figure 1. Conceptual Model.

Hypothesis 1 (H1). *There exists a significant association between protean career attitudes (self-directed and value-driven attitudes) and organizational commitment (affective, continuance and normative commitment).*

Hypothesis 2 (H2). *There exists a significant association between boundaryless career attitudes (boundaryless mobility and mobility preference) and organizational commitment (affective, continuance and normative commitment).*

In today's world, a protean career orientation and a boundaryless career approach are crucial in deciding on a career path. India is an emerging economy, having around 25% of the young population in the country [42]. From a human resource point of view, understanding their perspectives and their approach toward a career is crucial. To fill this gap, the current study evaluated the effect of a protean career orientation and a boundaryless career of organizational communication. This study will be valuable for practitioners to comprehend young people's minds and their points of view toward the protean career orientation. Consequently, the following conceptual model and their relationship have been depicted in Figure 2.

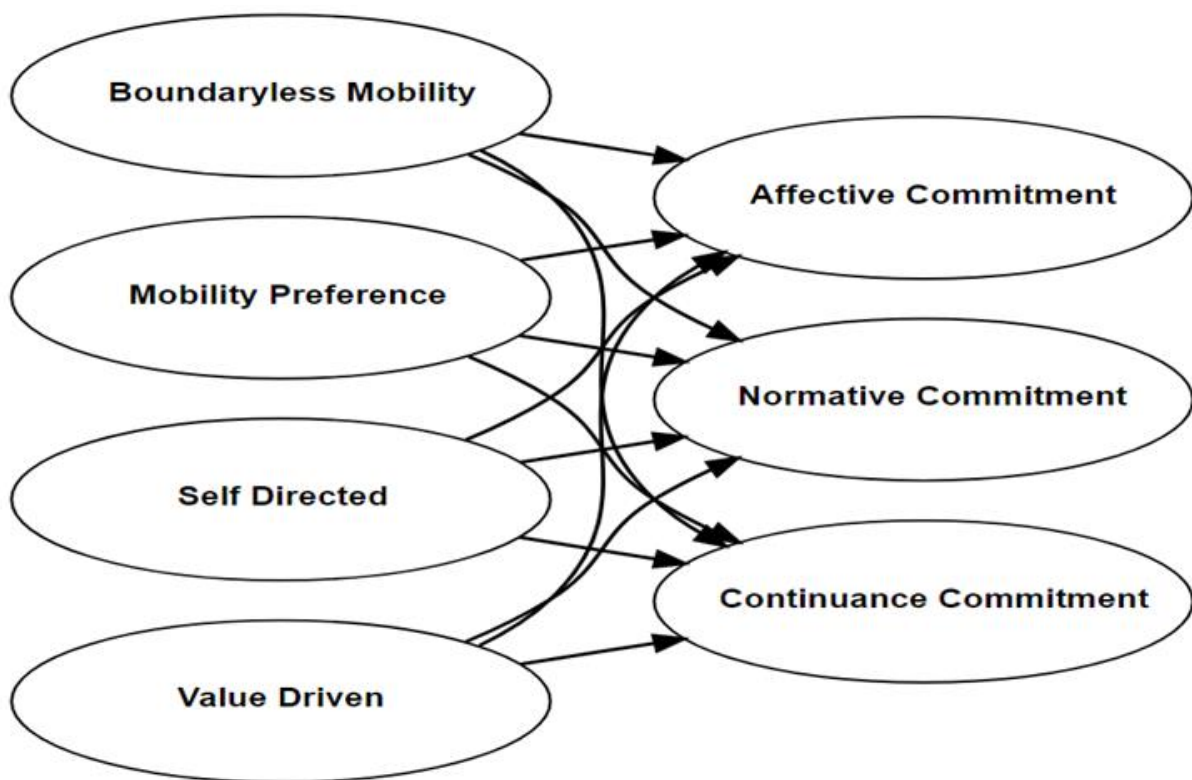


Figure 2. Conceptual Model (Hypothesized Relationship among Variables).

2. Methods

2.1. Variables and Data Sources

To assess the proposed measurement model for this study, a structured questionnaire was used. The survey contained 40 items related to three constructs i.e., a protean career, a boundaryless career and organizational commitment. To examine the protean career (self-directed and value-driven) this study adopted 14 items from [46]. The boundaryless career (boundaryless mobility and mobility preference) construct was measured using 13 individual items adopted from [46]. Organizational commitment (affective commitment, normative commitment and continuance commitment) was measured using 13 items developed from [43]. All the survey items were modified, keeping in mind the context of the three measurement constructs. A five-point Likert scale was used to measure the response on a scale of “1 = (strongly disagree) to 5 = (strongly agree)”. The questionnaire was designed in the English language. Further, to ensure the appropriateness of the questionnaire and language, a pretesting procedure was adopted. The pretesting exercise was conducted to verify the extensiveness, language and aptness of the questionnaire and confirm the content validity. After pretesting, minor modifications were done to remove the ambiguous and irrelevant items and phrases from some of the questions.

2.2. Sampling Technique and Sample Classification

The data was collected from different IT companies situated in Delhi and the NCR region of India. The respondents included all levels of IT professionals working in different IT companies. The reason for the selection of such a sample, IT company workers, was because they are very prone to change their career frequently. It gives very authentic information about a protean career and a boundaryless career. A simple random sampling procedure was adopted to draw the sample from the population under consideration. Table 1 presents the demographic characteristics of the sample.

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of the Sample.

Demographic	Category	Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	292	48.7
	Female	308	51.3
Age	Below 25 Years	156	26.0
	25–35 Years	171	28.5
	35–45 Years	201	33.5
	Above 45 Years	72	12.0
Marital Status	Married	349	58.2
	Unmarried	251	41.8
Income	Up to five Lacs	232	38.7
	Up to seven Lacs	148	24.7
	7 Lacs and above	220	36.7
Educational Qualification	Graduation	469	78.2
	Post-Graduation	131	21.8

2.3. Demographic Data

The demographic characteristics of the sampling method were reflected through a convenient sampling technique. The structured questionnaire was used to gather responses by approaching staff members of different IT firms based in the NCR (National Capital Region, including Delhi, Noida and Gurugram). The employees working at the mid-level in the hierarchy were approached. In total, responses were collected from 672 IT professionals, but the data were analyzed from 600 complete survey forms (response rate: 89.28%). Table 1 displays the demographic profile of the respondents.

2.4. Measures

The items were measured on a five-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree). Another scale from [46] was utilized for boundaryless career attitudes, assessing two dimensions, namely the boundaryless mindset and physical mobility. Organizational commitment was verified using three factors (affective, continuance and normative commitment) from [50], which is an improved version of the [43] commitment scale.

2.5. Analysis

Furthermore, equation modeling with the R package Lavaan [56] was incorporated. The SEM Plot [57] in the R package was applied to draw the models (CFA and structural models). R packages are open-source software and they are a powerful tool to get the appropriate result from a data set. The factor loadings shown in Table 2 are statistically significant at the 0.05 level when their values are greater than 0.5. The value for CFI also fits into the acceptable limit of 0.949, CMIN/df is 1.962 and RMSEA is 0.040 (Table 3). These values are within the threshold of acceptable values [58] of these fit indexes. From Table 4, it could be concluded that all constructs exhibit and fill discriminant validity requirements. Table 5 indicates the average variance extracted (AVE) and composite reliability (CR) score. The AVE should be above 0.50 and the CR should be above 0.70 for measures to exhibit convergent validity [59]. As a result, all of the constructs in Table 5 satisfy the requirements. Thus, all the measures exhibit convergent validity requirements. Figure 3 displays the measurement model. The correlations between constructs and factor loadings are shown in Figure 3.

Table 2. CFA Results.

Constructs	Items	CFA Loadings *
Self-Directed [46]	SD1	0.758
	SD2	0.835
	SD3	0.797
	SD4	0.853
	SD5	0.856
	SD6	0.809
	SD7	0.793
	SD8	0.756
Value Driven [46]	VD1	0.808
	VD2	0.824
	VD3	0.849
	VD4	0.836
	VD5	0.801
	VD6	0.694
Boundaryless Mobility [46]	BM1	0.695
	BM2	0.706
	BM3	0.725
	BM4	0.816
	BM5	0.848
	BM6	0.843
	BM7	0.777
	BM8	0.77
Mobility Preference [46]	MP1	0.722
	MP2	0.802
	MP3	0.788
	MP4	0.675
	MP5	0.743
Affective Commitment [47]	OC1	0.649
	OC2	0.629
	OC3	0.601
	OC4	0.611
Normative Commitment [47]	OC5	0.581
	OC6	0.514
	OC7	0.561
	OC8	0.589
Continuance Commitment [47]	OC9	0.601
	OC10	0.551
	OC11	0.507
	OC12	0.554
	OC13	0.521

(R) reverse-scored items; * Loadings are significant at 0.05 level.

Table 3. Fit Indexes for the Measurement Model.

Fit Index	Value
CMIN/DF	1.962
CFI	0.949
RMSEA	0.040
PCLOSE	0.995

Table 4. Discriminant Validity.

	NC	SD	VD	MP	BM	AC	CC
NC	0.809						
SD	0.096	0.808					
VD	0.049	0.406	0.804				
MP	0.021	0.192	0.206	0.747			
BM	0.085	0.419	0.274	0.198	0.775		
AC	0.770	0.042	0.022	0.021	0.016	0.825	
CC	0.884	0.009	0.040	0.129	0.017	0.680	0.601

Table 5. Descriptive Statistics and Reliability.

Constructs	Mean	SD	α Reliability	AVE	CR
Self-Directed	4.33	0.808	0.938	0.653	0.937
Value Driven	4.28	0.863	0.915	0.646	0.916
BM	4.37	0.721	0.926	0.600	0.923
Mobility preference	4.01	1.085	0.857	0.558	0.863
Affective Commitment	4.41	0.657	0.795	0.593	0.795
Normative Commitment	4.35	0.583	0.744	0.589	0.760
Continuance Commitment	4.44	0.551	0.682	0.561	0.790
N = 600					

Table 5 shows the descriptive statistics and Cronbach's alpha reliability (the alpha was calculated using the 'psy' R package [60] for the constructs).

The analysis reveals that all factors meet the discriminant validity requirements.

This indicates that all elements satisfy the average variance extracted (AVE) and composite. The results evaluated from the structural model show the value of the parameter estimates, as evident in Table 6. Various fit index values are displayed in Table 7. As per Byrne (2010), the estimates are within acceptable levels (CMIN/df < 3; CFI > 0.9; RMSEA < 0.07; PCLOSE > 0.05). Table 7 summarizes the outcomes of the hypothesis testing. Figure 3 demonstrates the structural model with standardized path estimates.

The assessment from the structural model shows the value of parameter estimates, as evident.

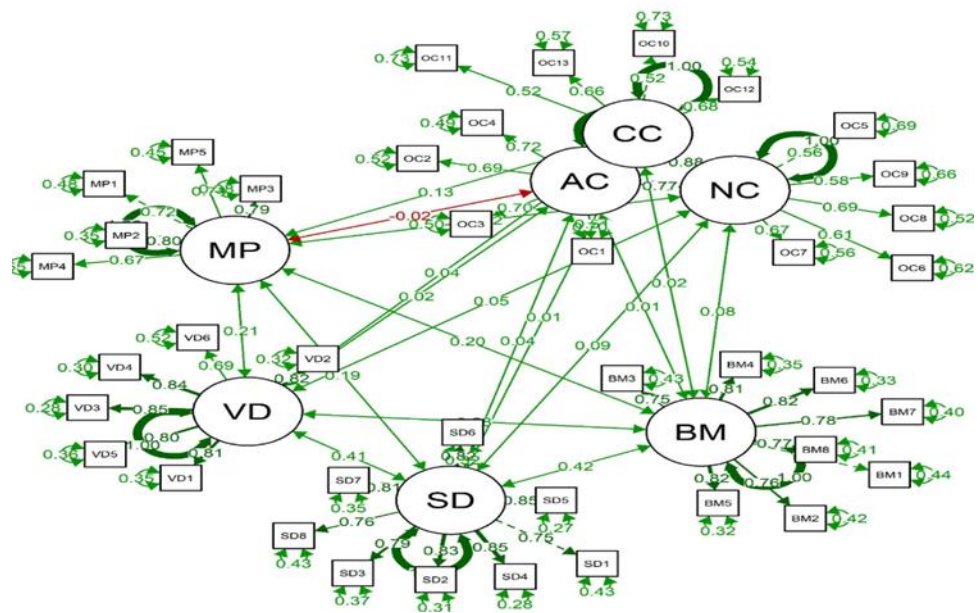


Figure 3. Measurement Model. Figure Legend: VD: Value Driven; SD: Self-Directed; BM: Boundary-less Mobility; MP: Mobility Preference; AC: Affective Commitment; NC: Normative Commitment; CC: Continuance Commitment.

Table 6. Estimates for the Parameters of the Model.

Path			Estimate	Std. Estimate	SE	Z	Sig. of Z
SD	→	AC	0.033	0.043	0.043	0.766	0.444
VD	→	AC	0.007	0.011	0.035	0.207	0.836
BM	→	AC	−0.001	−0.001	0.042	−0.024	0.981
MP	→	AC	−0.022	−0.032	0.036	−0.622	0.534
SD	→	NC	0.046	0.070	0.037	1.223	0.221
VD	→	NC	0.004	0.007	0.031	0.128	0.898
BM	→	NC	0.032	0.049	0.036	0.890	0.373
MP	→	NC	−0.002	−0.004	0.031	−0.072	0.943
SD	→	CC	−0.013	−0.026	0.031	−0.431	0.666
VD	→	CC	0.011	0.024	0.025	0.419	0.675
BM	→	CC	−0.001	−0.001	0.030	−0.019	0.985
MP	→	CC	0.060	0.129	0.026	2.346	0.019

Table 7. Fit Indexes for the Structural Model.

Fit Index	Value
CMIN/DF	2.75
CFI	0.934
RMSEA	0.045
PCLOSE	0.995

3. Results

The current study adds to the relevant literature on organizational commitment by testing the correlation between the two career attitudes and the organizational commitment of Indian IT companies. The confirmatory factor analysis (Table 2) shows that the dimensional structure of these concepts is valid even in a non-western context. However, no significant relationship between protean and boundaryless career attitudes and organizational commitment was found [60–63]. No significant effects were observed on the dimensions of organizational commitment (AC, NC and CC) due to protean career attitudes (SD and VD). This result is the opposite of what has been reported in recent studies [40,46]. Further, no significant association was observed between MP and AC, NC, BM and AC, NC and CC concerning boundaryless career attitudes. This finding also contradicts the findings of previous studies, [64], which found a negative relationship between boundaryless career attitude and organizational commitment, indicating that people with boundaryless careers are not dedicated to their employers [46].

However, a significant positive relationship between mobility preference and continuance commitment was observed in the present study (0.06, $p = 0.019$) (Table 6). The mobility preference scale, developed by [46], measures the benefits an employee enjoys by working for the same organization over a long period. The continuous commitment scale measures the cost of leaving an organization with regard to status, monetary rewards and professional relationships. Subsequently, a high score on the mobility preference scale (mean: 4.01, std. deviation: 1.085) (Table 5) and continuance commitment scale (mean: 4.44, std. deviation: 0.551) is derived and a positive relationship between them means that Indian IT sector employees seek job security over everything else. The results of the current study conclude that the two career patterns (protean and boundaryless) are not significant predictors of organizational commitment. This can be due to a variety of contextual and situational factors, and the current study was conducted on Indian IT sector employees. Generally, the Indian employee–employer relationship is primarily based upon salary and compensation considerations, and employees mainly focus on getting reasonable remuneration from their employers above everything else. This is due to the economic conditions of Indian society, where job security is the prime objective of the workforce in view of fears of unemployment and poverty, as there is an absence of social security or unemployment welfare in India. The present study covered IT sector employees at the engineer, developer and middle-management levels. Hence, with a large pool of engineering graduates in the Indian labor market, the employees at this level are easily replaceable.

4. Discussion and Implications

4.1. Business and Managerial Contribution and Implications

Ref. [65] reported that high levels of unemployment lead to higher organizational commitment among employees. The absence of any effect of protean and boundaryless career attitudes on organizational commitment could be attributed to India's unemployment situation and the presence of a large pool of graduates applying for IT sector jobs. The significant implication of these findings for future research is that unemployment should also be studied in the organizational Indian context. The relationship between boundaryless career attitudes and organizational commitment should be negative in industries where many are unemployed or employees perceive a high degree of job insecurity [66]. The major managerial implication of the present research is that human resource managers should take a closer look at the factors that influence employee loyalty and commitment, as unemployment is a factor that is out of the control of any organization and its employees. When unemployment ceases to exist as a motivator for employee loyalty, organizations might find it complicated to retain talented and motivated employees. Some trends in this regard are already visible, where employees in big organizations have left their jobs in favor of their start-ups and, in the process, they have taken other employees who share the same values in their start-ups [67]. The core implication of this study is to simply avoid stereotyping employees based on their career orientations. There is a high chance that people with a protean and boundaryless attitude can be easily avoided because their loyalty

is at stake. The result of this study can be useful to managers to avoid being prejudiced managers in the company. The findings of the study are also useful for early theories of organizational commitment, including [68] the “side-bet” theory of calculative commitment and attitudinal commitment, along with a novel theory of organizational commitment as well. Commitment to an organization is relative and, through the protean and boundaryless orientations, we can comprehend it clearly.

4.2. Theoretical Contribution and Implications

Today, a protean career orientation and a boundaryless career are prominent among Indian IT professionals. Organizations are making significant efforts to retain their best talent. The findings of the study suggest that all relations are insignificant except mobility preference (MP) and continuance commitment (CC). Frank Parson’s trait and factor theory can be validated and strengthened in the context of India. The results of the study are indicating the same. It is reflected from the findings of the study that commitment is least possible with employees that have a protean career orientation and a boundaryless career. Self-directed and value-driven approaches majorly focus on selected career options and are found to be less committed to organizations. It is also evident from the results of the study that individuals that have a boundaryless mindset and prefer mobility in their career will be less committed to any organization. It is a significant contribution to career development theories, where employees having these orientations must be treated in a specific way.

4.3. Limitations and Scope for Future Research

The present work, like the other studies, is not without limitations. It was only confined to IT professionals. The protean and boundaryless career orientations should be investigated for other sectors in India. The present study was limited to the Delhi-NCR. The bulk of the Indian IT industry is also present in Karnataka, Bengaluru and Mysore in India. Future studies should take samples from IT sector employees in Karnataka, such as Bengaluru and Mysore. A comparative study can also be conducted comparing these two career attitudes in northern and southern states for IT employees in India. The cross-section design of the present research impedes the conclusions’ inferences regarding the causal effects of protean and boundaryless career attitudes on organizational commitment. Thus, future studies should use a longitudinal design. In addition, further work can be accomplished using moderating variables, including social capital and employee competencies, to assess the existence of various relationships. In future studies, unemployment can be considered moderate in the causal relationship between boundaryless career attitudes and organizational commitment, as this will help empirically substantiate the current study’s observations. Moreover, other demographic variables can be added as moderators in the connection between a protean career, boundaryless career and organizational commitment.

5. Conclusions

The current study demonstrates that the notions of protean and boundaryless career attitudes are valid in an Indian context. Future research can take a leaf out of the present research work.

However, based on the study’s findings, the researchers came to the following conclusions and recommendations: practical suggestions and theoretical suggestions.

5.1. Practical Suggestions

The authors’ practical recommendations include a better understanding of employees’ career orientations during their career-maintenance stage in a company, as well as additional knowledge in providing services and advising potential employees prior to onboarding, primarily by taking individual career preferences into account, such as higher job satisfaction toward market orientation. A further practical proposal for the current research is that human resource officers should devote more attention to the variables that

influence personnel commitment and devotion, since joblessness is a phenomenon that neither individuals nor businesses might control.

5.2. Theoretical Suggestions

The authors' theoretical proposal is to further investigate whether multifaceted and boundary-free careers result in individual career patterns, such as higher job satisfaction.

Nonetheless, with the exception of mobility preference (MP) and continuance commitment (CC), which are not applicable in the context of India, additional research findings suggest that Frank Parsons' trait and factor theory could be reinforced. According to the findings of a subsequent study, employees with a boundaryless career and a protean career orientation are the least likely to be committed. Also, a self-directed and value-driven path, in which the majority of employees prefer to focus on specific career options rather than being committed to organizations.

In conclusion, this career orientation might be checked for demographic variables, including age, gender, marital status and income groups. Additional study could be commenced, considering the external factors affecting one's career, namely organizational culture in the context of India. Consequentially, work can be initiated on older employees who checked out for protean and boundaryless career orientation in their career maintenance stage. Nevertheless, unlike the other studies conducted in the west, protean and boundaryless career attitudes have no significant impact on organizational commitment.

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