

DETERMINING THE FEASIBILITY INDEX OF PSYCHOLOGICAL CONTRACT ON MANAGEMENT STUDENTS

¹Shivani Wadhwa, ²Sanjive Saxena

¹Faculty Jagan Institute of Management Sciences, Sector-3, Rohini, New Delhi-85

² Faculty Jagan Institute of Management Studies, Sector-5, Rohini, New Delhi-85

Abstract-The educational institutions of today are witnessing transformation in myriad ways. For, example, the traditional courses are being replaced by MOOC (Massive open online courses) or the conventional examination system being replaced by open book system of examination. However, in spite of these rampant changes brought about the invasion of Information Technology and the changing business world, another growing concern which is observed is the question of Psychological contract, which essentially means that there is an implied understanding in the form of unwritten contract between the management of these educational intuitions and the students pursuing varied programs from these institutions. The has necessitated the need to develop a feasibility index for the psychological contract which exists between the institutions and the students. For, knowing the index quotient, will immensely contribute to various functions of the management institutions such as estimating the possible number of students who will attend alumni interaction program or other events wherein the students participation will make a difference. This paper is an attempt to develop the feasibility quotient by an extensive focus on the literature review process to identify the components that will go into the conception and formulation of the same. The development of the paper follows a structured approach, starting with basics, gradually moving to the core components before arriving at the index.

Key words: Feasibility index, management, educational institutions, psychological contract

Introduction

The information technology has brought about a significant change in the means and mechanism of imparting education to the students irrespective of the stream being pursued. The significant change is being witnessed in the form of wide application of technology in the making of assignment and submission of project work; in the form of class room teaching by deploying power point presentations; and in the form of generating several analytical reports from various software tools such as MS Excel and the like. However, despite application and deployment of information technology, there is a dark side too of this aspect. It is related to the generation of dependency of the students on information technology and the associated tools which are being used. So much is the reliance on the technology that there seems to be an apparent, perhaps hidden psychological contract between the students and the technology in the form of providing readymade solutions to the problems faced by the students in the sense that technology will act as the saviour whenever needed or required for example, in the preparation of assignment and copying of notes. But, the problem is not confined to the process of bailing out the students in times of crises, but it has filtered down to the process of an apparent development of the psychological contract between the students and the educational institutions to which they are associated. For, in today's high tech world, the students have forced themselves to seek readymade solutions without incurring extra efforts on their part. In other words, students have the perception that once they have taken admittance in the college their responsibility to put in extra efforts towards, employment and the usage of analytical skills ends and that it is now the institute who should take responsibility to ensure that they land in employment sector by providing them training for employment, coaching and coaxing them to develop logical and analytical skills.

This paper is an attempt to develop a feasibility index of psychological contract of management students. With the help of this feasibility index the management of the educational students will be able to develop action plan for taking corrective and preventive actions which will enable them to ensure that the improvise their processes which are responsible for the conduct of various activities and events.

Reason for choosing the topic of the paper

The authors are well experienced in faculty members working in the management institutes and are involved in the process of teaching undergraduate as well as post graduate students. As a part of the teaching process, over a period of time, the authors realised that there has been a gradual decline in the motivation level of the students and that the students are required to be coaxed to come up with solutions which involve thinking process. The problem is not only confined to the academics but has spread to other areas namely campus placements and the organization of the events and activities. For example, it is gradually becoming a norm that the student is unwilling to take measures on its own to develop the necessary skills required to clear the campus recruitment process such as communication skills improvement. The students, it is experienced, that they have adopted the attitude that the college is responsible for the development of the communication skills and it is the responsibility to institution to provide the job *and that the student will not be putting in the efforts on its own*. This nonchalant attitude has forced the authors to determine the psychological index which will enable the management of the institute to determine beforehand the amount of efforts required to put into the student. Thus the topic of the paper.

Objective of the paper

The paper is designed to address the following objectives

- a. To address the problems which the management of an educational institutions face in the conduct of various events and activities as a part of the curriculum or as a part of the complete personality development process
- b. To develop an index which will assist the management of the educational institutions to take corrective and preventive actions prior to the organization of the activity or an event

Scope of the paper

The scope of the paper is limited to the students from management colleges and institutions. The target audience for this research paper include both the students from the undergraduate stream as well as the students from the Post graduate management stream. The prime reason for restricting the scope to the management students is the fact activities and events form a part of the curriculum of their program as they are required to be equipped with the basic management skills before they appear for the campus placements.

Literature review

According to Higgins, Monica et. al, (2012), in their study which had the base in the basic organizational behaviour and examined that organizational learning is based on three dimensions namely psychological safety, experimentation and leadership that focussed on learning reinforcements. They authors determined that the psychological safety comprised of the following sun scales which included the aspects such that in the school(or college), it is fair and easy to speak out what is in your mind and that (2) People in this school(or college) are generally comfortable and easy about talking their issues, problems and disagreements and (3) People in the school(or college) are encouraged to share information about what does and doesn't work. In other words, psychological safety comprises of these attributes and possibly many more of these. The students of management stream in are required to work in social networks and thus are expected to demonstrate their attitudinal skills and performance outcomes (Baldwin, Timothy, *et al*, 2017). In the same context, in their research concluded that the centrality in friendship, communication and adversarial circumstances impacted the grades as well as the attitude of the students in various activities. In the same context the authors concluded that team effectiveness between the team and within the team resulted in the overall impact of the performance outcome. In other words, an index can be developed which will enable the managements as well as the students to develop and improve the within and across the teams to measure the resultant performance of the participants. According to Cole, Michael, S, *et.al* (2017) the combined effect of students learning process comprising of psychological hardiness and motivation and learning can result in the increase of learning outcomes. In other words, the psychological index plays a great role in determining the learning capability of the students. The authors in their study determined that the relationship between the motivation for learning and the outcome of the learning process is moderated by the student's individuals' psychological hardiness.

Research methodology

The following research methodology was adopted

- a. The first step was the formulation of the research topic. The research topic was taken care off on account of the several problems and issues which the teachers face in day to day operations of managing the students
- b. Once the topic was frozen the next phase involved the process of defining the objective of the paper. The objective of the paper was formulated by keeping in mind the requirements of day to day operations
- c. Once the objective was formulated the next step involved the process of formulating the scope of the paper. the scope of the paper was developed by keeping in mind the issues and challenges in the conduct of various activities and events pertaining to the curriculum
- d. Once the scope was formulated the next step was the research design process. This process included the formulation of the questionnaire for the purpose of data collection. The questionnaire comprised of two parts. The first part was designed to capture the demographic details of the respondents while the other part of the questionnaire to meet the research objectives
- e. Initially the sample size the target sample size was 80 but due to practical limitations it was reduced to 67. The practical limitations included the incomplete questionnaire, non-serious of the students due to exam time and the other aspects.
- f. Once the data was collected, it was subjected to treatment and the findings were analysed by using MS Excel software
- g. The findings culminated into recommendations and future scope

Findings & interpretations

The following table represents the demographic details of the students involved in the research process

The above analysis reveals an interesting fact. The majority of the respondents in the survey are between 20 and 22 years with science as the background stream. This means that the respondents have studied science subjects' upto class 12. Perhaps this reveals an area of future research as to why the students having this background major into the management subjects. Considering the number of respondents studying having graduates and post graduates stream it is worth noting the fact that there is little significant difference to the tune of 3.75%. This indicates that the sample selected is balanced in nature.

Table 1 below depicts the demographic details of the respondents.

Dimensions	Number of respondents
Age group	
• Below 20 years	12 (15%)
• Between 20 and 22 years	40 (50%)
• Above 22 years	15 (18.75%)
Stream (background)	
• Science	28 (35%)
• Commerce	20 (25%)
• Arts	15 (18.75%)
• Others	4 (5%)
Family background	
• Service	32 (40%)
• Family Business	12 (15%)
• Others	23 (28.75%)
Graduates	32 (40%)
Post Graduates	35 (43.75%)

Table 1: Depiction of demographic information of the respondents

Table 2 below depicts the variables along with the weightage of psychological index based on the questionnaire. The weightage is arbitrary but can be customised according to the needs of the institute.

Sr. No.	Variable	Weightage	Rating
1.	Sincerity as demonstrated by the student towards the organization of several activities or events	.32	X1
2.	Sincerity, punctuality and honesty in submitting of assignments and practical work	.30	X2
3.	Sincerity and transparency towards the work given by teachers	.15	X3
4.	Timely submission and performance of the various tasks and activities in conscientious manner	.10	X4
5.	Active participation in various activities of the institute	.13	X5

Table 2: Depiction of variables and the weightage to the variables

The index is calculated by

Index

$$\beta = (.32 \times X1 + .30 \times X2 + .15 \times X3 + .10 \times X4 + .13 \times X5) / 80$$

Index calculation of particular student

Student: Smith Course: BBA, 1 st semester			
Sr. No.	Variable	Weightage	Rating
1.	Sincerity as demonstrated by the student towards the organization of several activities or events	.32	8
2.	Sincerity, punctuality and honesty in submitting of assignments and practical work	.30	6
3.	Sincerity and transparency towards the work given by teachers	.15	7
4.	Timely submission and performance of the various tasks and activities in conscientious manner	.10	4
5.	Active participation in various activities of the institute	.13	8

Table 3: Depicting the index calculation of a particular student

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Index } \beta &= (.32 \times 8 + .30 \times 6 + .15 \times 7 + .10 \times 4 + .13 \times 8) / 80 \\ &= (6.85 / 80) * 100 \\ &= 8.6 \text{ (Rounded)} \end{aligned}$$

The index rating of 8.6 is very good. It indicates that the particular student, Smith is able to demonstrate the essence of psychological contract index which means that the student has an implied commitment towards the institute and hence takes an active interest in the various activities. The institute will have to impart lower amount of effort and hence can bank upon this student that the level of participant would be quite high.

Indices results of all the 67 students

8.5	8.5	8.5	7.7	4.5	8.6	8.5	8.5	8.5
5.8	5.8	8.5	2.7	6.8	8.5	5.8	5.8	5.7
6.8	6.8	5.8	4.7	6.3	5.8	6.8	6.8	7.2
8.6	8.6	6.8	5.8	8.6	6.8	8.6	8.6	
8.5	8.5	8.6	6.3	3.2	8.5	8.5	8.5	
5.8	5.8	8.5	5.6	3.3	5.8	5.8	4.65	
6.8	6.8	4.5	3.4	4.5	6.8	6.8	6.8	
8.6	8.6	6.3	4.6	6.8	8.6	8.6	6.2	

Table 4: Depicting the indices of all the 67 respondents

Figure 1, below depicts the chart of all the 67 students

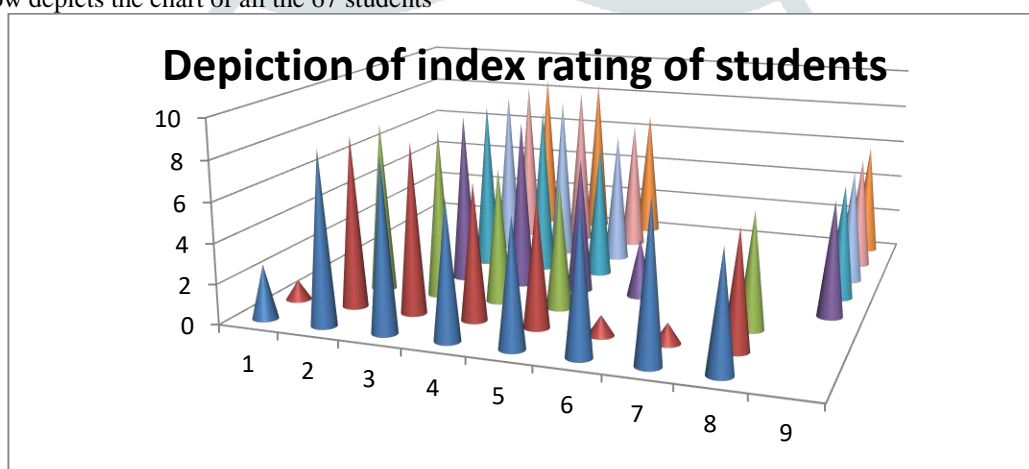


Figure 1: Depicting the indices of all the 67 students

From the graph it is evident that the majority of the respondents are demonstrating high index value thereby indicating that there is high degree of compliance on the various aspects of the program which they are pursuing. The same information is depicted in Table 5 as given below

Psychological Rating	Count
8.5	14
8.6	11
7.7	1
7.2	1
6.8	13
6.3	3
6.2	1
5.8	11
5.7	1
5.6	1
4.7	2
4.6	1
4.5	3
3.4	1
3.3	1
3.2	1
2.7	1

Table 5: Depicting the grouped ratings of all the respondents

Interpretation of table 5:

From the table, it is evident that the majority of the respondents 44 respondents have been rated in the scale of 6.2 and above. This indicates that more than 50% of the respondents are sincere, conscientious and are more responsive to the needs of the organization. In other words, they are able to demonstrate that they have degree of psychological contract and the degree of compliance level is very high. Hence any task which is given to the group as a whole has a greater chance of being executed successfully.

Findings and recommendations of the study

The findings indicate that the educational institutions where the degree of compliance is very high the management of the institutions is required to impart more of the practical aspects so as increase the compliance level.

Recommendations

The findings indicate that the students who demonstrate a high degree of compliance to the psychological contract stand a good chance to excel in life as he becomes more practical in his approach.

Limitations of the study

The limitation of the study is confined to the students of management educational institutes only. By expanding the scope of the study and including them students from various streams such as engineering, medical and the like a better result can be obtained.

Conclusion

The study has contributed to the existing literature in the sense that the problem seems to be acute as the students have started taking things in casual manner by delegating the psychological contract which is biased to them. This index will help the management to execute the corrective and preventive actions in a better manner.

References

- Baldwin, T, *et al*, (2017) "The Social Fabric of a Team-Based M.B.A. Program: Network Effects on Student Satisfaction and Performance", *Academy of Management Journal* Vol. 40, No. 6
- Cole, Michael S. *et.al*, (2017), "Student Learning Motivation and Psychological Hardiness: Interactive Effects on Students' Reactions to a Management Class", *Academy of Management Learning & Education*, Vol. 3, No. 1
- Higgins, Monica *et. al*, (2012), "Examining organizational learning in schools: The role of psychological safety, experimentation, and leadership that reinforces learning", *Journal of Educational Change*, February 2012, Volume 13, Issue 1, pp 67–94