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A Shift from Work-Life Balance to Work-Life Choices: A Study on Tourism Professionals in Goa

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Abstract

Work-life balance is passé, enter work-life choices. But the next question arises, is this concept applicable to every working individual? Goa is predominantly a tourist destination, which thrives on inbound tourism through its extensive dependency on chartered flights, EDM festivals and as a wedding destination. However this study focuses on career oriented men and women, as well as entrepreneurs who work for the tourism industry in Goa. Their focus is on providing travel solutions in terms of visa assistance, booking air travel, planning itineraries. In a nutshell their orientation is towards outbound travel. These individuals have also made some serious choices in life to achieve what they wanted in their professional front. The study tries to identify the human resource issues that are prevalent in the micro, small and medium enterprises that they work with. This also calls for defining the term small and medium tourism enterprises (SMTE). Issues may be translated into remuneration, ethical aspects, relocation, and working hours. The survey responses will reveal the work-life choices made in their business or career. The study also explores the identity perceptions of tourism professionals who enter the

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business world. With the shift in insight of doing a job to being a career oriented individual or business person, we observe that the professionals also have a personal opinion on sense of responsibility, personal identity, and commitment. The study also delves into the aspect of choices related to achievement, mobility, self-worth, and work.

In the long run, we shape our lives, and we shape ourselves. The process never ends until we die. And the choices we make are ultimately our own responsibility.

-Eleanor Roosevelt

There's no such thing as work-life balance. There are work-life choices, and you make them, and they have consequences.

-Jack Welch

Keywords: Entrepreneurs, Identity perceptions, Work-life choices, Workaholism, Career choices, Work-life balance, Commitment.

Introduction

Defining Career Oriented Individual and Entrepreneur:

This exploratory study would like to identify the contemporary factors that influence a career oriented professional in the tourism industry. It tries to study the shift of concern from work-life balance to work-life choices; it also examines the preferences and motivations of high achievers, the type of job resources that make them committed to their career. It also explores the three types of commitment with a special focus on desire-based commitment. Though commitment to the family also requires commitment to work and thereby choices come to the forefront. Choice could relate to the question of who will stay back at home and take care of the dependent parents, or children. It could also mean could they travel and stay away from their families to study the client's nature of business or work in a foreign land. It could also imply their willingness to relocate and let us know that whether the family or spouse is supportive of such a move. It could also indicate developing oneself through further education or experience and getting better placed than their colleagues who would have been at

the same career front in the past. Choice could even spell giving up a current position in order to start up a new enterprise on their own. Bernstein (2014) has quoted Judith and Ivor Martin's concept of identity as, "When attempting to enter the business world, you need to learn to be someone else. It is called having a professional identity". The concept is generalised to both genders. An entrepreneur has to project a different ego state during interaction with colleagues and subordinates. This process of projection has to be learnt and imbibed in due course of time.

Literature Review

A study (Roy and Andrews, 1999) highlights the process and outcome of persons who think and feel, it could be in a group or as an individual by the use of conscious awareness and choice to create human and environmental integration. The theoretical framework developed by Roy was termed as Adaptation and is extensively used and tested throughout this research.

In recent years the tourism industry both hospitality and travel have seen a tremendous increase in large multi-national hotel, food and beverage and other tourism subsidiaries in the global scenario, the industry still thrives on large number of small and medium sized firms.(Baum, 1999; Lee-Ross, 1999; Pizo, 1999).

This requires us to define small and medium tourism enterprises (SMTE's). According to a study (Breen, Bergin-Seers, Jago and Carlsen, 2005) SMTE's are all businesses, which operate in the tourism industry and employ up to hundred employees. These may include sole operators who do not employ any staff. They further define the concept of micro businesses, as those which employ between one and four workers, small businesses as those that employ between five and nineteen employees and medium businesses as ones which employ between twenty and hundred employees.

The scope of this study ranges around study of micro, small, medium and large sized travel enterprises in Goa. Apart from this the HR aspect focuses on high standardisation and labour intensive feature of the industry. (Lashley and Taylor, 1998)

Tourism industry is well known for its high rate of attrition, as (Lucas, 1995) observed that this industry is characterised by high levels of attrition, which is particularly high amongst the front line and operational staff.

It is also evident that there are prevailing low standards with regards to small and medium enterprises due to lack of training and certification. However among all these there are men and women who strive to make the most of it, the biggest challenge faced by them are the work-life choices which will be discussed in this paper.

Powell (2009) and Thrane (2008) argued that the tourism industry considerably requires long work hours and lower than average pay.

Groysberg & Abrahams (2014) highlighted some intriguing gender differences that emerged in their survey data; while defining professional success, women place more value than men do on individual achievement, having passion for their work, receive respect, and make a difference, but less value on organizational achievement and ongoing learning and development. Hence a lower percentage of women than men list financial achievement as an aspect of personal or professional success.

Due to the changing scenario there has been an entry of more women in the work force. A research that was done on work-life balance pertaining only to women has now shifted gears to both genders; it is no longer a woman related issue (Dash, Anand and Gangadharan 2012).

McClelland (1967) stated that strong 'inner urge', 'inner concern' and 'need for achievement' builds up the

‘achievement pressure’ in people. This may make an individual to overlook the aspects of job demands and cling on to the available job resources to achieve the goals of becoming a leader or an entrepreneur. McClelland also suggested that it could be possible to induce achievement motivation in adults than place them in an un-induced environment.

Rai and Srivastava (2011) conducted an empirical study on a sample of 150 units run by women entrepreneurs. The findings indicated that they were motivated to start the enterprise because of profits and to make money, they did not want to work for others, they wanted control and freedom, the power to take their own decisions, and for the feeling of self-achievement. Some also wanted to provide employment opportunities to others.

In a company such as TATA Interactive Systems most of the senior management roles are taken up by both men and women who do not shy away from working long hours, which may work up to 12-14 hours at a stretch, just to provide optimum service and delivery to their clients. It also involves taking up calls from home, work from home option on weekends, in addition to working 9 to 5 in the office. Here the employees deliberately do not want to focus on work-life-balance but more on work-life-choices; they choose to work and achieve more in life.

Another concept as proposed by a study (Kossek et al. 1998) is that Job Mobility Preparedness is the ‘degree to which an individual prepares himself or herself to be ready to act on internal and external career opportunities’. This concept also explores the questions whether an individual is ready to be mobile, what could be the life circumstances that promotes this behaviour or prepares them for the next career move.

The common behaviours suggested by Kossek et al., were actively looking out for new career opportunities within and outside the organisation, job market and profiles, they may seek to change the nature of their jobs, or align themselves to their own interest and strengths. Another study (Schyns et al., 2007) suggests that preparedness to change is an individual's wish to acquire higher task demands or greater complexity.

Objectives of the Descriptive Research

1. To profile the respondents business into their respective SMTE's.
2. To list the work-life choices made by travel professionals in Goa.
3. To study the differences in perception of professional choices made based on gender.
4. To highlight the influence of income group on mobility and work-life choices of travel professionals.
5. To identify the hierarchy of work-life choices of travel professionals in Goa.

Research Design

1. Exploratory and Descriptive research design has been used for this study
2. Quantitative and Qualitative research method

Sample Size

A sample size of n=110 travel professionals from North, and South has been taken for this exploratory research. Sampling method used was snow-ball sampling. A self-designed questionnaire was administered and was based on a five point Likert-scale the questions were based on aspects covered in the literature review.

Statistical Tests Used

1. t-test for identifying significant statistical differences of choices between genders.
2. Cross tabulation to study the mobility choices of travel professionals based on income groups.

3. Factor Analysis to identify the hierarchy of professional work-life choices.
4. Chi-square test on work-life choices made and income group.

Data Analysis:

Table 1: Profiling of the respondents travel agencies.

		Count	Strength	Business Type	Location
Organisation	Air Asia PSA	1	2	Micro	Panjim
	Airsonic	4	7	Small	Panjim
	Akbar Travel	5	5	Small	Panjim
	Alpha Travel	1	1	Micro	Panjim
	C&K	2	10	Small	Panjim
	Cicerone Air	5	5	Small	Margao
	Cozy Nook	6	6	Small	Panjim
	DGRD Tours	1	4	Micro	Panjim
	EzyTravels	2	5	Small	Panjim
	Freedom	12	19	Medium	Panjim / Vasco
	Goa Shipping Ltd	1	1	Micro	Vasco
	Deepti Travels	1	1	Micro	Calangute
	Mahalasa Ent.	8	8	Small	Vasco
	PriNati	3	4	Micro	Panjim
	Riya Travels	13	18	Small	Panjim
	Splendor T&T	3	4	Micro	Panjim
	Thomas Cook	10	10	Small	Panjim
	Trade Wings	3	10	Small	Panjim
	Travel Pack	21	200	Large	Verna
	Vikas Ent.	1	1	Micro	Vasco
	Vincent Travels	7	8	Small	Vasco
Responses	n=110	-	-	-	

Source: Venan Bonaventure Dias

From the responses received from the 21 travel agencies. The table 1 indicates that 8 agencies are classified under Micro Organisations, 11 are Small agencies, 1 medium and 1 large organisation.

Table 2: Reliability of the instrument

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.735	15

Source: Venan Bona venture Dias

The Cronbach’s Alpha score of 73.5% on the 15 items that were presented in the survey indicates that the instrument is highly reliable.

Table 3: Demographics

Variables		Frequency of Respondents			Percentage
		Male n =49	Female n=61	Total N=110	100%
Age	<25	10	17	27	24.5%
	26-30	14	29	43	39.09%
	31-40	15	11	26	23.63%
	41-50	9	2	11	10%
	>50	1	2	3	2%
Profession	Employed	43	57	100	90.90%
	Self Employed	6	4	10	9.10%
	House Wife	0	0	0	0
	Retired	0	0	0	0
	Entrepreneur	0	0	0	0
	Others	0	0	0	0
Family Status	Single	26	29	55	50%
	Married	23	30	53	48.18%
	Single Parent	0	2	2	1.81%
	Others	0	0	0	0
Income Group	50,000 - 1Lakh	17	32	49	44.54%
	Above 1Lakh - 3Lakhs	21	25	46	41.81%
	Above 3Lakhs - 5Lakhs	7	2	9	8.18%
	Above 5 Lakhs	4	2	6	5.45%

Source: Cheryl Venan Dias

From table 3 it is indicated that though number of the female employees working at a travel enterprise is higher than males, on the other hand males belong to a higher income group than females.

Table 4: List of choices made by travel professionals in Goa

Professional Choices	Mean
Professional Identity Choice	3.90
Self-Worth Choice	3.72
Achievement Based Choice	3.69
Mobility Choice	3.56
Work Life Choice	3.45

Source: Cheryl Venan Dias

With reference to list of choices made by travel professionals in Goa, table 4 indicates the mean scores of all professional choices made in a descending order.

Perceptions of travel professionals working in Goa

Hypothesis statement: H1: There will be a significant difference in work-life choices made among the genders.

Variables under test

Independent Variable: Choices Made

Dependent Variable: Perception among the genders

H₀₁: There is no difference in the perception of professional choices between genders.

Table 5: t-test for variables tested

Variable	Mean Diff.	Std.Error	t-value	Significance
Professional Identity Choice*				
PIC 1	0.101	0.150	0.697	0.486
PIC 2	0.148	0.147	1.008	0.315
PIC 3	0.123	0.201	0.614	0.540
Mobility Choice*				
MC1	-0.158	0.198	-0.797	0.426
MC2	-0.023	0.220	-0.104	0.916
MC3	-0.148	0.236	-0.627	0.531
Achievement Based Choice*				
AC1	-0.077	0.166	-0.464	0.642
AC2	0.248	0.161	1.532	0.128
AC3	0.082	0.180	0.456	0.648
Self-Worth Choice*				
SWC1	0.001	0.171	0.005	0.995

SWC2	0.086	0.167	0.514	0.607
SWC3	-0.255	0.211	-1.206	0.230
Work Life Choice*				
WLC1	0.308	0.189	1.633	0.105
WLC2	0.435	0.184	2.357	0.020**
WLC3	-0.168	0.198	-0.853	0.395

Source: Venan Bonaventure Dias and Cheryl Venan Dias

Table 5 indicates that perception towards work-life choice related to working long hours has a significant difference among genders leading to rejecting the null hypothesis and accepting the alternative hypothesis that there is a significant difference among perceptions of genders with regards to working long hours. While for all other variables the null hypothesis is accepted.

Table 6: Cross Tabulation between choices to relocate based on better remuneration and current income status.

		Income Group				Total
		50,000 – 1 Lakh	Above 1 Lakh - 3 Lakhs	Above 3 Lakhs - 5 Lakhs	Above 5 Lakhs	
I am willing to relocate for a better remuneration or pay package	Strongly Disagree	2	2	1	0	5
	Disagree	2	1	0	2	5
	Neutral	10	16	1	1	28
	Agree	18	18	6	1	43
	Strongly Agree	17	9	1	2	29
Total		49	46	9	6	110

Source: Venan Bonaventure Dias

Table 6 indicates that travel professionals in all the income groups are willing to relocate based on better remuneration.

‡ *Elaborated in table 9b for Factor Analysis. ** Significant at two-tailed p<0.05

Table 7: Cross tabulation between choice to work in any other part of India and the income group.

		Income Group				Total
		50,000 - 1 Lakh	Above 1 Lakh 3 Lakhs	Above 3 Lakhs 5 Lakhs	Above 5 Lakhs	
I cannot work in any other part of India as I have a lot at stake in Goa.	Strongly Disagree	4	3	1	1	9
	Disagree	12	10	3	0	25
	Neutral	11	10	2	3	26
	Agree	13	14	2	1	30
	Strongly Agree	9	9	1	1	20
Total		49	46	9	6	110

Source: Venan Bonaventure Dias

Table 7 displays a distribution of travel professionals who are willing to work in other parts of India as well as in Goa; 50 do feel that they cannot relocate to other parts of India as they have a lot at stake in Goa.

Table 8 Cross Tabulation between choice to work only in Goa than any other part of the world and income group.

		Income Group				Total
		50,000 - 1 Lakh	Above 1 Lakh - 3 Lakhs	Above 3 Lakhs - 5 Lakhs	Above 5 Lakhs	
I prefer to work in Goa than in any other part of the world.	Strongly Disagree	4	2	0	0	6
	Disagree	5	2	3	0	10
	Neutral	13	14	3	2	32
	Agree	11	15	3	2	31
	Strongly Agree	16	13	0	2	31
Total		49	46	9	6	110

Source: Venan Bonaventure Dias

Table 8 indicates that 62 travel professionals are willing to work only in Goa than in any other part of the world.

The mobility based choices indicates that though better remuneration is something that the travel professionals may consider to move to another state or agency, however they prefer to work in Goa than in any other part of the world as they have a lot at stake in Goa.

Factor Analysis to identify the hierarchy of professional work life choices.

Table 9 a: KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.723
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	317.012
	df	105
	Sig.	.000

Table 9 b: Rotated Component Matrix^a

	Component				
	1	2	3	4	5
I strongly want to make a positive change in society. (PIC 1)	.180	-.027	.825	.159	.193
I am willing to relocate for a better remuneration or pay package. (MC1)	.108	-.027	.043	-.245	.682
While at work do you feel a strong inner urge for achievement. (AC1)	.593	.172	.344	-.151	.193
I prefer to work in Goa than in any other part of the world.(MC2)	.033	.219	.015	.622	-.268
I can largely determine what matters the most for my organisation. (PIC 2)	.578	.306	.012	-.181	-.439
Do you feel you are adequately empowered to do more than what your role entails? (SWC1)	-.091	.197	.480	-.005	-.395
Do you have the willingness to take business risks or work related risks? (WLC1)	.225	.626	.240	.016	-.078

	Component				
	1	2	3	4	5
Do you feel motivated by the thought that your business can generate employment for others? (SWC2)	.437	.204	.561	-.100	-.266
I cannot work in any other part of India as I have a lot at stake in Goa.(MC3)	.118	-.101	.091	.853	.037
Do you feel you can work long hours if the job demands?(WLC2)	.498	.345	.076	.118	.116
Do you feel that you can speak up against things that are unethical or not in line with your principles?(SWC3)	.784	-.019	.061	.207	.047
Have you developed a control system in your organisation to stream line a process? (AC2)	.184	.605	.062	-.117	-.270
Have you contributed any innovative ideas within your organisation? (AC3)	.030	.570	.584	.073	.035
The course of my career largely depends on me.(PIC3)	.453	.450	-.026	.224	.007
Do you feel it necessary to bend rules or compromise to complete a task. (WLC3)	.008	.576	.004	.371	.459

The KMO measure indicates a satisfactory adequacy level of 0.723, validating the analysis indicated in table 9a. While table 9b displayed the analysis which yielded five factors. The first factor comprised of the variables AC1, PIC2, WLC2, SWC3, PIC3 - indicates that variables related to achievement, self-worth, and work life choices take precedence over Second Factor which comprised of WLC1, AC2, and WLC3. The third factor comprised of AC3, PIC1 and SWC2. The fourth factor comprised of MC2 and MC3, the fifth factor comprised of MC1 which indicated that mobility based choices are of least priority to the travel professionals in Goa. Together the five factors explained 58.229% of the overall variation (See Appendix 1) Table 10: Professional Choices - Dichotomous Response

Table 10: Professional Choices – Dichotomous Response

Choices made while seeking employment			
	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
Yes	25	55.0	-30.0
No	85	55.0	30.0
Total	110		

Source: Venan Bonaventure Dias

Table 11: Chi-square test on choices made

Test Statistics	
Choices made while seeking employment	
Chi-Square	32.727
Df	1
Asymp. Sig.	.000
a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 8.0.	

Source: Venan Bonaventure Dias

As per table 11, there is a significant difference of the choices made by travel professionals, while seeking employment, where $p < 0.05$ with $p = 0.000$.

Findings and Discussion

While some attempt has been made to identify the professional identity through qualitative methods, a more concrete study can be made by mapping the transactional style inventory of the travel professionals in Goa. It is observed that though better remuneration could be a reason for relocation among the travel professionals, however they have a lot at stake in Goa including the choice to work only in Goa as compared to other parts of India. It was also observed that the travel professionals did make choices while seeking employment in this industry. There was a strong inner urge for achievement, they valued their professional identity, felt a sense of pride that their business was generating income for others; they were also willing to put in long hours of work if required. This opinion has significant differences while compared among both the genders. Some of the respondents have indicated

growth and a better package abroad as a reason for a choice to relocate elsewhere. While others feel happy to be working for up to three years with the same organization, some have changed their professional orientation. Working also gives them a sense of responsibility. Some have taken over a family business even when there was a choice to move abroad. Discussion with travel industry professionals from other states revealed that poaching was quite rampant in states such as Karnataka and measures such as anti-poaching and non-disclosure agreement does very little to curb this menace. The employees are more stable and loyal to their employer in Goa as qualitative data indicates that they have been with their employer between 3 to 20 years at a stretch, which is quite significant, in terms of loyalty. Factors related to achievement, self-worth, personal identity, work life choices appeared to be more significant than variables related to relocation; this also corresponds with the mean rank of choices made by the travel professionals.

Conclusion

Considering Goa to be unique in its entire splendour related to tourism, the travel professionals when given an option would prefer to make their career in Goa with more vigour and enthusiasm provided they are motivated.

As a part of theory building process Roy's adaptation model presents an individual as an holistic adaptive system which is subject to external stimulus, in this research the stimulus is working hours, pay scales, ethical dealing which will translate itself into self-worth, life goals, professional identity and other work-life choices.

There is an array of work-life choices made by the travel professionals. Some choices are intrinsic such as professional identity, self-worth, and achievement. Mobility based choices are based on extrinsic factors as in better remuneration and other commitments. There could also be other factors which are yet to be explored. It is also important that their skill levels be developed in order to add to the Human Capital requirement for the tourism sector in Goa. It is indicative while profiling the travel agencies that

they are predominantly from the small and medium enterprises, who have budget constraints. This explains why many of the work force, i.e. 77% of male respondents and 93% of the female work force are in the salary range of 50,000 – 2 Lakhs per annum. Though they may enjoy the benefit of not being taxed, the cost of living and living standards may be affected due to this income range. This to some extent may be relaxed by the incentives offered by the service providers. It is also important to find out if there is a deferred incentive plan provided by the employers as in Public Provident fund and insurance, and Employee State Insurance Scheme or if the airlines and hospitality industry provides them with incentives in terms of familiarisation trips, free accommodation at a resort, new destination launch party, vouchers for sales of tickets and hotels, best performer awards, and to find out if they choose to work with micro, small and medium enterprises that offer such deferred incentive plans. All these aspects could be taken into consideration in a further study.

Appendix 1

Total Variance Explained									
Component	Initial Eigen values			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	3.717	24.778	24.778	3.717	24.778	24.778	2.099	13.992	13.992
2	1.499	9.993	34.771	1.499	9.993	34.771	2.000	13.331	27.323
3	1.335	8.899	43.671	1.335	8.899	43.671	1.769	11.790	39.113
4	1.178	7.855	51.525	1.178	7.855	51.525	1.528	10.188	49.301
5	1.006	6.704	58.229	1.006	6.704	58.229	1.339	8.927	58.229
6	.948	6.319	64.548						
7	.844	5.627	70.175						
8	.817	5.449	75.624						
9	.729	4.858	80.482						
10	.638	4.251	84.734						
11	.617	4.111	88.845						
12	.535	3.567	92.412						
13	.468	3.119	95.530						
14	.354	2.362	97.893						
15	.316	2.107	100.000						
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.									

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