Chapter 9
Exploring the Theoretical Relationship Between Psychological Ownership and Career Anchors

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Abstract This chapter explores the possible role that individuals' psychological ownership can play in their career anchors, since job satisfaction and commitment are common denominators of both constructs. The chapter will commence with a description and an explanation of career anchors and psychological ownership. The possible relationship between the seven dimensions of psychological ownership and the eight career anchors is explored to indicate possible linkages. Several propositions are developed, based on their theoretical relationship, and these propositions are illustrated in a proposed figure.

Keywords Psychological ownership · Career anchors · Employment relationship · Talent management · Career development · Organisational commitment · Job satisfaction · Organisation-based psychological ownership · Job-based psychological ownership

Introduction

Organisational competitiveness in the current unpredictable environment, which is the result of trends of globalisation and technological sophistication, forces organisations not only to recruit top talent, but also to retain talented employees who are psychologically connected to their work and to the organisation (Arnold and Randall 2010). As the 'war for skilled talent' escalates, according to De Villiers (2006), it becomes increasingly important to explore the psychological factors that influence people's commitment and loyalty to an organisation in order to retain skilled employees. According to João (2010), there is an increase in career mobility opportunities for professionally qualified employees due to the global skills shortages that impact on talent retention.

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Employees are adjusting to a new truth of shorter employment relationships by following new career strategies and behaviours that support and promote their own career success (Ballout 2009). Therefore, employees are forced to use both occupation-related and career meta-competencies (Ferreira et al. 2010). Locally and internationally, skilled employees have realised that career opportunities have no boundaries and that they can choose from a larger pool of employment possibilities.

Organisations are challenged to come up with new research-based knowledge and practical applications of the ways to attract, develop and retain talent that will fit into the twenty-first century work context and that will support relevant career development interventions (Coetzee and Gunz 2012). According to Feldman and Bolino (2000) employees' career decision-making and their psychological attachment to an occupation are influenced by their career anchors. Career anchors refer to the employees' perceived abilities, career motives and values (Schein 1996). Individuals' choice of a career or a workplace is determined by their career anchors. The purpose of career anchors is to assist individuals in organising their experiences, identifying their long-term contributions and establishing the criteria for success by which they can measure themselves (Coetzee et al. 2007). Smit (1992) states that career anchors can help one understand the reasons why people choose specific occupations, because these career anchors provide useful frameworks for determining how individuals' career anchors relate to their organisational commitment levels. This brings us to the question: "How can the psychological factors that influence people's job attitudes, satisfaction and commitment be linked to their career anchors?"

In an extensive literature study conducted by Olckers and Du Plessis (2012b) it is concluded that organisations can benefit if they understand psychological ownership as an attitudinal state because psychological ownership leads employees to feel responsible toward the organisation and to show stewardship and therefore psychological ownership can play a role in the retention of talent. Psychological ownership has recently received attention from many researchers. It is hypothesised that a psychological sense of ownership may form an integral part of an individual's relationship with an organisation.

To date, no research has been done on how individuals' psychological ownership can play a role in their career anchors, and this role will be explored in this paper in order to make a contribution to career development and talent management.

Defining Career Anchors and Psychological Ownership

A *career anchor* is defined as a pattern of self-perceived talents and abilities, personal values and motives that influences an individual's career-related decisions, which represents that individual's career identity or self-concept (Schein 1978). According to Kniveton (2004), the purpose of a career anchor is not to categorise a whole person, but to reflect the person's career-related orientation towards their work. This orientation plays an important role in the career-making decisions of a person (Schein 1978), affects the way in which a person responds to experiences at work (Ramakrishna and Potosky 2003), and develops over time (Schein 1990). However, according to Schein (1978) it is possible for a person to have a preference for more than one anchor.

Psychological ownership has been described as a cognitive-affective construct that is based on individuals' feelings of possessiveness and of being psychologically tied or attached to material objects (for example tools or work) as well as to immaterial objects. (for example ideas or workspace). Psychological ownership thus refers to a person's state of mind—a feeling that the target of ownership or a piece of that target is theirs ("It is *mine*!"). This state of mind reflects the person's "awareness, thoughts and beliefs regarding the target of ownership" (Pierce et al. 2003, p. 86).

Scholars specialising in analysing organisations (Avey et al. 2009; Mayhew et al. 2007; Pierce et al. 2003, 2004) focus on the roles that the psychology of possession and the sense of ownership play in the work and in the organisational context. According to Van Dyne and Pierce (2004), psychological ownership asks the question: "How much do I feel this is mine?".

Organisational Commitment and Job Satisfaction as Common Denominators Between Psychological Ownership and Career Anchors

Organisational Commitment

Pierce et al. (2003) theorise that psychological ownership has positive consequences regardless of the organisational member's financial ownership or legal status as owner or non-owner. Pierce and his colleagues propose that psychological ownership is associated with positive behavioural and psychological consequences, and that this association will hold true even for members without an equity ownership position.

Pierce et al. (2001) argue that feelings of ownership produce pleasure and as a result, members of an organisation will want to maintain their relationship with whatever produces this positive effect. They further propose that as employee-owners develop feelings of ownership of the organisation, they become more and more integrated into the organisation. This integration reveals itself, in part, through an attachment to the organisation and a desire to maintain that relationship (VandeWalle et al. 1995).

O'Driscoll et al. (2006) and Van Dyne and Pierce (2004) conclude that psychological ownership leads to the type of organisational attachment that Meyer and Allen (1991) refer to as affective commitment. Affective commitment is based on a sense of identity with the organisation, its values and its goals, and is reflected in feelings of belongingness and of wanting to be attached to the organisation.

VandeWalle et al. (1995) establish a positive link between psychological ownership and organisational commitment. Van Dyne and Pierce (2004) have examined the relationship between psychological ownership and organisational commitment in two organisations and have reported that psychological ownership of an organisation increases variance in commitment. Several studies (Avey et al. 2009; Mayhew et al. 2007; O'Driscoll et al. 2006; Olckers 2011) confirm that there is a strong association between affective organisational commitment and psychological ownership of an organisation.

According to Coetzee et al. (2007), organisational commitment is related to occupational commitment. Meyer et al. (1993) indicate that when involvement in one's occupation is experienced as satisfying, affective commitment develops. In a study done by Valentine et al. (2002) a positive relationship is found between organisational commitment and person-organisation fit. Research conducted by Judge and Ferris (1992) and Peterson (2003) shows that conflict between employees' personal characteristics and the attributes of their organisations results in low levels of job satisfaction, organisational commitment and turnover, as well as sub-standard job performance. Although Coetzee et al. (2007) do not find that career anchors significantly predict organisational commitment, their results show a number of significant associations between the organisational commitment levels and career anchors of their respondents.

Since both psychological ownership and career anchors seem to be related to organisational commitment, an association seems to exist between individuals' psychological ownership and their career anchors.

Job Satisfaction

According to Weiss and Cropanzano (1996), general satisfaction refers to the overall situation in the workplace, while job satisfaction refers to a more specific evaluation of a particular job. Van Dyne and Pierce (2004) propose that a feeling of being an important part of an organisation, thus the experience of psychological ownership, enhances general satisfaction and provides a context for job satisfaction. Employees who have a positive attitude towards their organisation and their work experience are more likely to report positive job satisfaction.

The theory of psychological ownership states that a sense of possession directed toward an organisation satisfies three basic human motives, namely efficacy and effectance, self-identity, and possession of place ('home'), and that this sense of possession produces positive evaluative judgements (Pierce et al. 2003). This theory is supported by research on possession that demonstrates that people develop favourable evaluations of their possessions (Beggan 1992), and that they judge owned objects more favourably than similar, un-owned objects (Nuttin 1987). Therefore, Van Dyne and Pierce (2004) argue that when employees feel possessive of an organisation (in other words, they have influence and control at work and an intimate knowledge about their organisation, and they feel they have invested themselves in their organisational roles), they should experience high levels of satisfaction, which in turn should influence job satisfaction. Several studies (Avey et al. 2009; Mayhew et al. 2007; Olckers 2011; VandeWalle et al. 1995; Van Dyne and Pierce 2004) provide empirical evidence of a positive relationship between psychological ownership and job satisfaction.

In their study, VandeWalle et al. (1995) prove that psychological ownership is a more potent antecedent of extra-role behaviour than satisfaction, and, therefore, that psychological ownership can be considered an important antecedent of extra-role

behaviour. The differential strength between psychological ownership and extra-role behaviour, and satisfaction and extra-role behaviour suggests that managers might derive more benefit from paying more attention to creating a sense of psychological ownership than trying to increase satisfaction. The difference is consistent with the theory of Pierce et al. (2003) that possession and the resulting sense of responsibility are core characteristics of psychological ownership, and that this is what differentiates it from other constructs that concern the relationship between organisations and their members.

Research provides evidence of increased job satisfaction when person-environment congruence exists (Roe and Lunneborg 1990; Spokane 1987) and, more specifically, when there is a person-environment fit between a career anchor and an occupational type (Kaplan 1990; Schein 1990). Ellison and Schreuder (2000) confirm that mid-career employees with a fit between their career anchor and their occupational type will probably experience a higher level of general and intrinsic job satisfaction than those with no such fit. Intrinsic job satisfaction refers to satisfaction that develops from the content of the job itself, which include the opportunity to do a variety of work and the chance to put one's own ideas into practice. Research conducted by Coetzee et al. (2010) indicates that people's career anchors significantly predict their job and career satisfaction, their overall life satisfaction and the meaning they attach to their work.

Career anchors, as well as psychological ownership, lead to increased job satisfaction. Based on the aforementioned research findings it is hypothesised that psychological ownership is significantly related to people's career anchors.

Description and Explanation of Career Anchors and Psychological Ownership

Career Anchors

Most people's career self-concepts are grounded in eight career anchors (Schein 1990) that are categorised according to three groups, namely talents-based, needs-based and values-based anchors (Feldman and Bolino 2000). The *talents-based* anchors comprise technical/functional competence (regarded as an expert among peers), general managerial competence (interested in making or co-ordinating major policy decisions and solving complex, organisational problems) and entrepreneurial creativity (the need to create or exercise creativity and to identify new organisations, products and services). The *needs-based* anchors comprise autonomy/independence (values personal freedom to do things one's own way), security and stability (values long-term employment for health benefits and retirement options) and lifestyle motivations (values maintaining a balance between personal/family needs and work/career needs). The *values-based* anchors comprise service and dedication to a cause (the need to express one's own values in the work context and to serve the

nation) and a pure challenge (to be involved in physically challenging work and risky projects that test personal endurance). An overview of the core goals/concerns and desires underlying each of the eight career anchors as summarised by Coetzee and Schreuder (2011), is given in Table 9.1.

According to Schein (1990), people generally strive for a balance between their career anchors and the work environment in which they pursue their career anchors.

Psychological Ownership

An organisational manifestation of psychological ownership has been suggested by several managerial practitioners (such as Brown 1989; Kostova 1998; Peters 1988) and scholars (such as Pierce et al. 2001). Rudmin and Berry (1987) and Van Dyne and Pierce (2004) explain that, in view of the ever-present nature of feelings of possession and ownership, it can be expected that individuals might develop feelings of psychological ownership toward various organisational targets, such as organisations themselves, jobs, work space, work tasks, work tools and equipment, ideas or suggestions, and even team members.

Two distinct types of psychological ownership, namely *organisation-based psychological ownership* and *job-based psychological ownership* have been identified (Mayhew et al. 2007).

Organisation-based psychological ownership is associated with an individual's feelings of possession of and psychological relation to an entire organisation. According to Mayhew et al. (2007), organisation-based psychological ownership could be affected by a number of characteristics, including company goals and vision, company policies and procedures, organisational culture and climate, status of the organisation and attitudes of senior management.

Job-based psychological ownership is concerned with individuals' feelings of possession toward their particular jobs (Mayhew et al. 2007). Researchers, such as Van Dyne and Pierce (2004), consider both types of psychological ownership as attitudinal rather than as enduring personality traits. According to Mayhew et al. (2007), psychological ownership is context-specific and reflects an individual's current position concerning both the present organisation and the existing job.

In their study, Mayhew et al. (2007) find that job-based psychological ownership is related to job satisfaction, whereas organisation-based psychological ownership is related to affective organisational commitment and job satisfaction. This finding provides support for *psychological ownership* as a distinct construct that has relationships with the work attitudes of organisational commitment and job satisfaction. Mayhew et al. 2007) also find that autonomy has direct and indirect effects on psychological ownership and work attitudes. According to Mayhew et al. (2007), organisation-based psychological ownership partially mediates the relationship between autonomy and organisational commitment, whereas job-based psychological ownership partially mediates the relationship between autonomy and job satisfaction.

Table 9.1 Core goals/concerns, desires and values of the eight career anchors (Source: Coetzee and Schreuder (2011, p. 81))

Schein's career anchors

Construct	Core goal/career concerns	Core desire from workplace	Core value
Talents-based career anchors			
Technical/functional competence	To exercise talent and develop knowledge of one's expertise	Challenging work that tests one's talents, abilities and skills	Specialisation Further learning and development in one's specialty
General managerial competence	To rise to organisational levels where one is responsible for major policy decisions and where one's own efforts will make the difference between success and failure	High level of responsibility; challenging, varied and integrative work; opportunities for leadership; work that contributes to the success of the organisation	Power and influence, advancement up the corporate ladder
Entrepreneurial creativity	To create a new business of one's own; to develop new products or services; to build new organisations	Challenging opportunities to create own enterprises; opportunities to create or invent new products or services	Power and freedom to create wealth High personal visibility and public recognition
Needs-based career anchors			
Autonomy/independence	To do things in one's own way, at one's own pace, by one's own standards and on one's own terms	Clearly delineated, time-bound kinds of work within own area of expertise, which allow one to accomplish tasks/goals on one's own terms and in one's own way	Freedom to achieve and demonstrate one's competence
Security/stability	To feel safe and secure	Job tenure and job security; retirement plan and benefits; rewarding of steady, predictable performance	Predictability and being rewarded for length of service
Lifestyle	To integrate one's work/ career with one's personal and family needs (to balance entire lifestyle)	Respect for personal and family concerns and openness to renegotiate the psychological contract in line with changing lifestyle needs	Flexibility and freedom to balance work and family life

Table 9.1 (continued)

Schein's career anchors

Construct	Core goal/career concerns	Core desire from workplace	Core value
Values-based career anchors			
Service/ dedication to a cause	To improve the world or society in some way; to serve humanity and one's nation	Opportunities to influence the employing organisation or social policies in the direction of one's personal values; opportunities to serve a higher purpose in line with one's personal values	Influence and freedom to operate autonomously in the pursuit of one's personal values or higher life purpose/ goal
Pure challenge	To overcome impossible obstacles; to solve apparently unsolvable problems, or to beat extremely tough opponents	Tasks or situations that provide a constant variety of challenging opportunities for self-tests	Power and influence to be competitive and win

Table 9.2 Differences between organisation-based and job-based psychological ownership

Organisation-based psychological ownership	Job-based psychological ownership
Employees' feelings of possession and psychological connection to the organisation	Employees' feelings of possession toward their particular jobs as a whole
Influenced by:	*Influenced by:*
Corporate goals and vision	Autonomy
Policies and procedures	Technology
Organisational culture and climate	Participative decision-making
Reputation of the organisation	
Attitudes of senior management	
Autonomy	
Technology	
Participative decision-making	
Related to:	*Related to:*
Affective organisational commitment	Affective organisational commitment
Job satisfaction	Job satisfaction
Partially mediate the relationship between autonomy and organisational commitment	Partially mediate the relationship between autonomy and job satisfaction

According to O'Driscoll et al. (2006), a less structured work environment provides employees with the opportunity to exercise control over their actions. These feelings of increased control are associated with a greater sense of ownership of both the job and the organisation. In their study, O'Driscoll et al. (2006) find that lower levels of structure in the work environment are positively related to higher levels of employee-felt ownership of both the job and the organisation. Each of the work environment structuring variables, namely autonomy, technology and participative decision-making, has a positive and significant relationship with both dimensions of psychological ownership. They further find that job- and organisation-based psychological ownership have a positive association with affective commitment to the organisation.

The core differences between organisation-based and job-based psychological ownership are summarised in Table 9.2.

Organisations can strengthen the link between job-based and organisation-based ownership by ensuring that employees understand the importance of their roles and jobs within the organisation. Trevor-Roberts and McAlpine (2008, p. 33) state that "creating a sense of ownership among employees for the organisation and their jobs has the potential to increase staff retention and productivity".

From the above discussion it seems that job-based psychological ownership is more related to career anchors than is organisation-based psychological ownership.
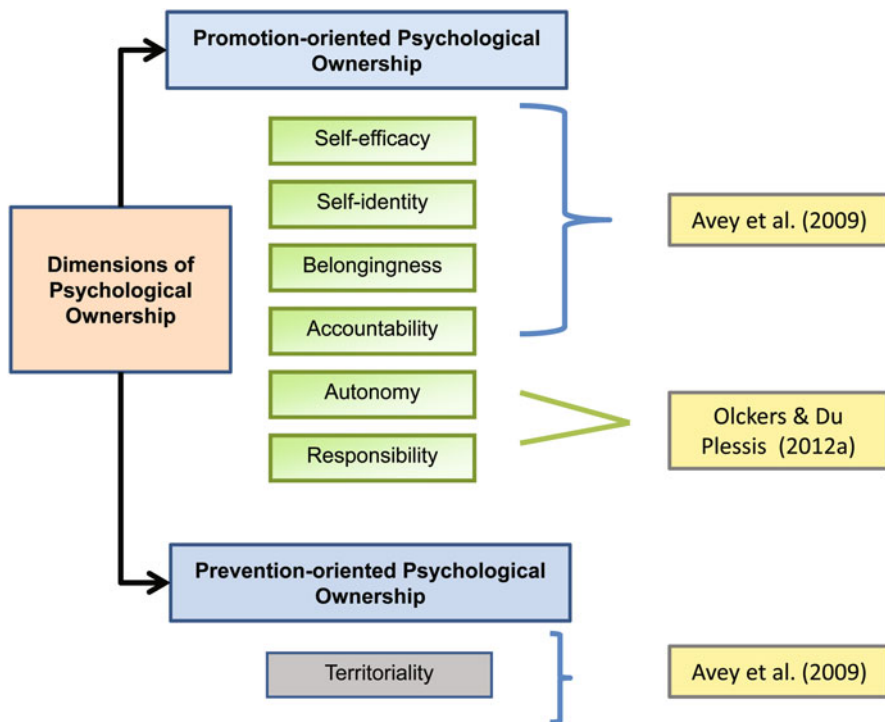
Fig. 9.1 Theoretical dimensions of psychological ownership. (Source: Olckers (2011))

Olckers (2011) asserts that psychological ownership is a multi-dimensional construct comprising seven dimensions that impact the extent to which psychological ownership is experienced. Pierce et al. (2001) report that psychological ownership has three dimensions, namely self-efficacy, self-identity and belongingness. Avey et al. (2009) expand on this construct by Pierce et al. (2001) by categorising the dimensions of psychological ownership as either promotive or preventive orientated and by positing the concepts of territoriality and accountability as additional aspects of psychological ownership. Olckers and Du Plessis (2012a) argue that autonomy and responsibility are significant and should be included in the dimensions of psychological ownership. The multi-dimensional construct of psychological ownership and its proposed dimensions are displayed in Fig. 9.1 and will be discussed in more detail.

Promotion-Orientated Psychological Ownership

Promotion-orientated psychological ownership is the extent to which employees might use their perceived psychological ownership of an object for the greater good of their work, their team or the organisation as a whole. According to Kark and Van Dijk

(2007), a promotion-focused approach reflects individuals' hopes and aspirations and is needed to pursue development, improvement and change to explore the advantages of creative behaviours. Six promotion-orientated psychological ownership dimensions have been identified, namely self-efficacy, self-identity, belongingness, accountability, autonomy and responsibility (Avey et al. 2009; Olckers and Du Plessis 2012a; Pierce et al. 2001).

Self-efficacy   According to Bandura (1995), self-efficacy is concerned with how individuals judge their capabilities and how, through their self-perception of efficacy, they influence their motivation and behaviour. Barling and Beattie (1983) contend that employees who feel capable of performing particular tasks tend to perform better. Furby (1978) states that being in control forms an important part of self-efficacy. Therefore, the possibilities of being in control, being able to do something with regard to the environment and being able to effect a desirable outcome of actions are psychological components that result in feelings of self-efficacy and the creation of psychological ownership.

Self-identity   According to Dittmar (1992, p. 86), people's sense of identity and their self-definition are "established, maintained, reproduced and transformed" through their interaction with tangible possessions, such as their physical work setting, and intangibles, such as their organisation's mission or purpose, coupled with a reflection upon their meaning. Individuals thus see the target of ownership (for example their job) as an extension of who they are (Belk 1988). Interaction with their possessions provides people with feelings of comfort, autonomy and pleasure, as well as with an opportunity to facilitate the development and cultivation of their identity (Kron and Saunders, as cited in Pierce et al. 2003).

Belongingness   Individuals have a need to have a certain own area or space, 'a home', in which to dwell (Weil 1952). According to Pierce et al. (2001), feelings of psychological ownership through attachment to a place or an object result in that place or object becoming 'home' to the individual. Belongingness in terms of psychological ownership of an organisation may be best understood as a person's feeling of being 'at home' in a workplace. A particular job, work team, division or even an organisation as a whole, might satisfy the need of individuals to belong in their places of work (Avey et al. 2009).

Accountability   Lerner and Tetlock (1999, p. 255) define accountability as "the implicit or explicit expectation that one may be called on to justify one's beliefs, feelings and actions to others". Being prepared to account for one's actions also implies the right to hold others accountable for theirs—this is consistent with the expected rights and responsibilities as described by Pierce et al. (2001). According to Pierce et al. (2001), for every right of ownership there is a balancing responsibility. For example, employees who feel psychological ownership of their organisation might feel they have the right to know what is happening with their target of ownership and might, therefore, challenge the leaders in their organisation to justify their decisions regarding the management of the organisation (Avey et al. 2009).

Autonomy Ryan and Deci (2006) define autonomy as the extent to which a person needs or is eager to experience individual initiative in performing a job. Therefore, people want to regulate themselves. The ability to exercise influence and control over objects forms an important aspect of possession and ownership (Rudmin and Berry 1987). Amabile (1983) and Utman (1997) are of the opinion that the promotion of autonomy frees individuals to experience attachment and intimacy. Mayhew et al. (2007) provide evidence that if employees are allowed the flexibility and freedom to plan and perform their work activities, and if they are given the opportunity to exercise discretion and to control their work environment, then the manifestation of their work-related attitudes (job satisfaction and organisation-based self-esteem) and behaviours is promoted. In their study, Md-Sidin et al. (2010) find that academics that are provided with enough autonomy over their work tend to possess higher degrees of psychological ownership.

Responsibility Feelings of ownership are accompanied by a felt responsibility for the target of ownership, and the implicit right to control that is associated with ownership also leads to a sense of responsibility (Pierce et al. 2001). Pierce et al. (2001) further state that when an individual's self is closely linked to a job or to an organisation, as in the case of psychological ownership, a desire to maintain, enhance and protect that identity will result in an enhanced sense of responsibility for the target of those ownership feelings. A positive relationship between responsibility activities and psychological ownership has been confirmed by Paré et al. (2006).

Prevention-Orientated Psychological Ownership

Prevention-orientated psychological ownership is the extent to which employees might withhold information from other employees because they seek to avoid change and want to maintain stability (Avey et al. 2009). Employees following a prevention-focused approach seek safety, stability and predictability and therefore stick to rules and obligations to avoid punishment (Higgens 1997).

Territoriality Organisational members can and do become territorial over tangibles, such as physical space and possessions; over intangibles, such as ideas, roles and responsibilities; and over social entities, such as people and groups. Brown et al. (2005, p. 578) define territoriality as "an individual's behavioural expression of his or her feelings of ownership toward a physical or social object". This definition of theirs includes behaviours for constructing, communicating, maintaining and restoring territories around those objects in the organisation toward which individuals feel proprietary attachment.

Relatedness Between Psychological Ownership and Career Anchors

Relation Between Self-Efficacy and Career Anchors

King (2004) states that individuals' self-efficacy and their intention to exercise control over career outcomes enable them to demonstrate career self-management behaviours. These career behaviours can lead to the achievement of desired career goals and ultimately to career success. According to Stucliffe and Vogus (2003), individuals develop an overall sense of efficacy and competence that enables them to gain control and mastery over task-related behaviours. Research indicates a positive relationship between career decision-making self-efficacy and personal attributes, and this finding supports the fact that individuals with high self-efficacy display considerable control over their life events and successfully master decision-making tasks and behaviours in career decision-making (Taylor and Popma 1990; Abdalla 1995). Empirical evidence supports the finding that self-efficacy beliefs influence career development and growth (Bell and Staw 1989; Noe and Wilk 1993).

Individuals with a pure challenge career anchor value the challenge of their work above all else. These individuals constantly search for opportunities to prove to themselves that they can overcome impossible obstacles. Their goal is to solve unsolvable problems and to win against all odds (Schein 1990). They most probably believe that they are capable of effecting the desirable outcome of their actions. This belief may also be applicable to individuals with a technical/functional competence career anchor because the satisfaction of being an expert in a particular field is more important to them than anything else. If they moved into other fields of work they would probably experience less satisfaction. Their identity is built around the content of their work and therefore they are committed to being a specialist (Schein 1990). The fact that they seem to be in control of their work and environment might enhance their feelings of self-efficacy.

> *Proposition 1*: There is a positive relationship between self-efficacy and the pure challenge career anchor.
>
> *Proposition 2*: There is a positive relationship between self-efficacy and the technical/functional competence career anchor.

Relation Between Belongingness and Career Anchors

According to Porteous (1976), 'the home' is essential for the reason that it provides the individual with both spiritual and physical security. The overriding need of an individual with a security/stability anchor is the need to feel safe and secure within an organisation. Therefore, there seems to be a positive relation between an individual's sense of belongingness and the security/stability career anchor.

> *Proposition 3*: There is a positive relationship between an individual's sense of belongingness and the security/stability career anchor.

Relation Between Accountability and Career Anchors

According to Pierce et al. (2003), a side benefit that organisations experience from psychological ownership is that a member with high levels of ownership will act as the conscience of others, with the result that all team members will make the required contribution to achieve their targets of ownership. Individuals with a service/dedication-to-a-cause career anchor have the desire to improve the world or society and to serve humanity and their nation. They seem to feel accountable for the world and society and want to serve a purpose in line with their personal values (Coetzee and Schreuder 2011). Therefore, it seems that a positive relationship might exist between individuals with a service/dedication-to-a-cause career anchor and accountability.

*Proposition*4*:* There is a positive relationship between accountability and the security/dedication-to-a-cause career anchor.

Relation Between Autonomy and Career Anchors

Individuals with an autonomy/independence career anchor value the freedom to do things their own way, and they will avoid being subjected to other people's norms. These individuals are characterised by self-reliance and independent judgement, and they find organisational life intrusive and restricting (Ellison and Schreuder 2000). Employment situations in which one can be the master of one's own fate appeal to them. Therefore, the individual's autonomy/independence career anchor and the autonomy dimension representative of psychological ownership seem to be related.

Proposition 5: There is a positive relationship between autonomy and the autonomy/independence career anchor.

Relation Between Self-identity and Career Outcomes

It seems that self-identity is not related to a specific career anchor, but that it is related to career outcomes in general. According to Lumley et al. (2011), the goals and desires that underlie people's career anchors have an influence on their career choices and decisions, as well as on their job and career satisfaction. For individuals to make correct career choices, they need to gain a deeper sense of identity. When individuals are guided to make correct choices, it is of the utmost importance to get them to gain self-insight (Hall and Mirvis 1995).

Relation Between Responsibility and Career Anchors

The managerial-anchored individual has an interest in being responsible for major policy decisions and has the desire to make a difference between the success and the failure of an organisation (Coetzee 2011). According to Rogers and Freundlich (1998), employees who feel like owners of the organisation believe that they have the right to influence the direction of the organisation and that they have a "deeper responsibility" than those who do not feel ownership. Therefore, it seems that a relationship might exist between individuals with a managerial-anchored orientation and responsibility.

> *Proposition 6*: There is a positive relationship between responsibility and the managerial competence career anchor.

Relation Between Territoriality and Career Anchors

For individuals with a technical/functional competence career anchor it is of the utmost importance to be an expert in a particular field. They feel drawn back to their specific area of competence (Coetzee and Schreuder 2011). These individuals might become so preoccupied with their "objects of ownership" that they might not want to share the object (for example, machinery or physical space or ideas) at the expense of their performance or of other pro-social behaviours. Therefore, it is possible that individuals with a technical/functional competence career anchor become too territorial about their expertise and knowledge.

> *Proposition 7*: There is a positive relationship between territoriality and the technical/ functional competence career anchor.

Based on the propositions that have been formulated, a theoretical framework has been constructed and is presented in Fig. 9.2 to indicate the probable relationship between psychological ownership and career anchors.

Conclusion

To conclude, this chapter contributes to the body of knowledge regarding the role that psychological ownership can play in career management. Management, human resource practitioners and career counsellors can benefit from recognising job-based psychological ownership as an important factor that leads employees to feel responsible towards their targets of ownership, in this case their career anchors.

Practical Implications for Career Counselling and Guidance

Psychological ownership, therefore, contributes to career psychology and may be used to inform HR practices that are concerned with optimising person-job fits and with the job and career satisfaction of employees with a view to career success and
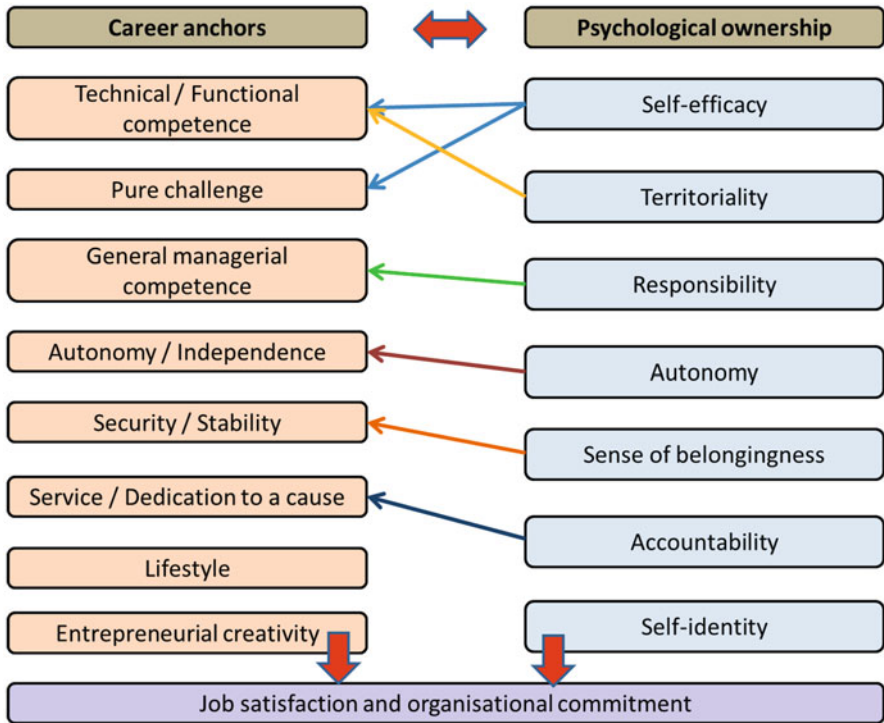
Fig. 9.2 Theoretical relationship between psychological ownership and career anchors

talent retention. In the light of the current changing work context, career counsellors may also find the suggestions in this paper useful to facilitate proactive career behaviour among, in particular, skilled employees.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, the probable theoretical relationship between psychological ownership and career anchors has been indicated. The presence of the common denominators of job satisfaction and commitment in both the aforementioned concepts has prompted the exploration of the probable theoretical relationship between psychological ownership and career anchors, and this relationship has been discussed. Furthermore, a description and explanation of career anchors and psychological ownership have been given. The possible relationship between the seven dimensions of psychological ownership and the eight career anchors were explored and the possible linkages have been indicated, which can be further researched.

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