

## Teachers' Individual Career Management and Vocational Delay of Gratification

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**Abstract** — The delay of gratification was formally put forward first by Mischel – a social psychologist from Stanford University through a classical experiment, i.e. children's candy delay of gratification. It effectively reveals individual skills and strategies such as impulse control and will maintenance in the face of lures. But the current research on vocational delay of gratification is still in the initial stage. In recent years, vocational delay of gratification has gradually become the focus of psychology, management and business circles. This research discussed and analyzed the definition of vocational delay of gratification as well as investigated the influence of individual career management and vocational delay of gratification on teachers.

**Keywords** - *Vvocational delay of gratification; Iindividual career management, Tteacher*

### I. INTRODUCTION

Psychoanalysis master Freud found delay of gratification during experimental study of children and considered that the ability of delay of gratification is one kind of self-control ability of infants. When direct gratification is hindered or delayed, individuals generate expectation for the award which does not exist for the time being, but may be gained in the future so as to relieve or eliminate the anxiety and tension caused by delay of gratification, adjust and control current behavior [1-3]. Since then, scholars' research enthusiasm for the concept of delay of gratification has been high. Till 1974, Mischel defined the concept and two-stage model of delay of gratification, systematically summarized and proposed the research paradigm of delay of gratification as well as expounded the influencing mechanism of cognition, motivation, environment variables and award on delay of gratification [4-6]. These mark academic research on delay of gratification enter a new age. More and more scholars start to study the application of delay of gratification in social division of labor and social fields.

Since 1990s, the research on delay of gratification has gradually extended to more extensive objects and fields. Domestic and overseas scholars have carried out theoretical discussion and empirical study of delay of gratification in such aspects as research paradigm, mental mechanism, influencing factor and cross-cultural comparison. However, the concept of delay of gratification has strong field feature. In other words, the ability of delay of gratification of different behavior types can be shown in different environment [7]. For example, daily behavior feature can be called daily delay of gratification or general delay of gratification. For learning field, academic delay of gratification is called. For vocational field, vocational delay of gratification is called. In 2007, Liu [7] put forward to introduce the concept of delay of gratification in vocational

field, i.e. vocational delay of gratification. This has attracted extensive attention of scholars. The current research on vocational delay of gratification is still in the initial stage. In recent years, vocational delay of gratification has become the focus of psychology, management and business circles.

### II. VOCATIONAL DELAY OF GRATIFICATION

#### A. *Definition of delay of gratification*

Mischel (1974) believed that the delay of gratification can be regarded as a manifestation of psychological maturity, and it is a part of self-control ability. In the situation of delay of gratification, people are willing to abandon current immediate gratification selection orientation and pursue the longer-term value and result which may bring more gains. They show self-control ability in the pursuing process, including the process of "making the choice of delay of gratification" and the process of "sticking to the choice until the objective is achieved" [4].

Popularly speaking, delay of gratification is "endurance", i.e. extending the time to gain gratification through effective control. It refers to a kind of value orientation or choice, i.e. giving up immediate gratification for longer-term value. Since it is required to give up current lure and control the desire for delay of gratification, strong self-control ability is reflected in delay of gratification. Such ability is an essential condition for individuals to complete the task or coordinate interpersonal relationship so as to better adapt to the society [1]. Delay of gratification is applied in many fields. In particular, it is widely applied in juvenile education field. Children have been taught to learn "endurance", abandon current lure and gain more benefits since their infant period. In the career development of adults, delay of gratification also plays an important role. It can enhance patience and endurance and well adjust work and social life.

### B. *Definition of vocational delay of gratification*

Some researchers study the concept of vocational delay of gratification and obtain the similar conclusions. Reynolds, Tobin, Liu, Wang and Liang *et al.* defined the concept of vocational delay of gratification respectively. The general definition is that, vocational delay of gratification refers to self-control ability of individuals who are willing to abandon immediate gratification opportunities which are adverse to current work such as rest, entertainment or impulsive behavior for the sake of more valuable long-term results such as better completing the task, gaining more benefits and achieving a higher career goal [8].

### C. *Research status of vocational delay of gratification*

When the concept of vocational delay of gratification was just proposed, it attracted extensive attention of scholars in various fields including management and psychology. Many researchers and scholars in other fields start to study this field. In recent years, vocational delay of gratification has gradually become the focus of psychology, management and business circles.

#### *(1) Measurement of vocational delay of gratification.*

Researchers have studied the tools to measure vocational delay of gratification, which lays a foundation for further research. Vocational delay of gratification serves as a dimension in the multidimensional questionnaire for work ethics prepared by Miller *et al.* [8]. Liu *et al.* [7] prepared vocational delay of gratification questionnaire including two dimensions (work delay and career delay of gratification) and 8 items. Kang [9] prepared vocational delay of gratification questionnaire including 3 dimensions (work delay of gratification, vocational delay of gratification and endurance) and 12 items. Although these measurement tools own good reliability and validity, the components of vocational delay of gratification are not same due to different types of work, different posts and different industries. Hence, the measurement tools for special vocational delay of gratification are still deficient [1].

#### *(2) Effect of vocational delay of gratification.*

Vocational delay of gratification mainly influences individuals and organizations. It is generally believed it has a positive effect on personal development and organizational objective achievement. Relevant researches indicate that the alienation sense of people with high vocational delay of gratification generates significant influence on organizational atmosphere, and that the work performance level of people who choose delay of gratification is higher [10]. The research results of Liu [7] show vocational delay of gratification plays an intermediary role between employees' vocational planning and vocational satisfaction as well as between their vocational training attention degree and fair promotion.

#### *(3) Research on teachers' vocational delay of gratification.*

Li [11] investigated the current situation of college teachers' vocational delay of gratification and her survey attracted students' attention. Later, Mohsin and Ayub [12] discussed the relationship between vocational delay of gratification and job satisfaction of high school teachers in Japan. Huang *et al.* surveyed the current situation of teachers' vocational delay of gratification in secondary vocational schools. Liu [13] discussed the relationship between teachers' vocational delay of gratification and vocational identity in middle schools. In one word, the research on teachers' vocational delay of gratification is still in the initial stage, and there are few researches about it.

In conclusion, it has not been long for delay of gratification to extend in specific vocational field, but it has attracted scholars' attention and a series of researches have been made. There are will many problems which need to be further explored. Domestic researches on vocational delay of gratification have the following characteristics: 1) there are short of special measurement tools for vocational delay of gratification; 2) relevant researches mainly focus on enterprise employees and nurses, while the research on teachers' vocational delay of gratification is still in the initial stage; 3) some achievements have been gained for the research on influencing factors of vocational delay of gratification, but there are still some deficiencies, such as the effect of individual career management on vocational delay of gratification. On this basis, this paper discussed the influence of individual career management on teachers' vocational delay of gratification and provided theoretical and practical support for the research on teachers' vocational delay of gratification so as to promote the development of teachers' and schools' sports cause.

## III. INDIVIDUAL CAREER MANAGEMEN

Career management refers to organizational or individual experience of seeking personal development in the face of increasingly fierce competitions. Career management gradually becomes the important content of psychological study and human resource management, and the development of career stage theory also becomes more and more mature. Career management generally includes two aspects: individual career management and organizational career management.

Individual career management (ICM) refers to individual design, planning and management of career so as to facilitate career development. Individual career management aims to maximize individual development and achieve individual development wish through effective management of personal interest, ability and development goal [13]. For individuals, the importance of individual career management concerns individual quality of life and development opportunity. For organizations, it concerns maintenance of employees' competitiveness. The objects and subjects of individual career management are employees. The key to career depends on employees' self-management. For individuals, the importance of individual career management concerns individual quality of life and development opportunity. For enterprises, it concerns maintenance of employees' core competitiveness [15].

In conclusion, individual career management is a major component of career management and also the significant content of enterprise human resource management. As human-based management in enterprise management improves, there are more and more researches on the two. Delay of management as an indispensable part in human-based management receives more and more attention. Thus, the research about the influence of individual career management on teachers' vocational delay of gratification in this paper has certain theoretical and practical significance.

#### IV. INFLUENCE OF INDIVIDUAL CAREER MANAGEMENT AND VOCATIONAL DELAY OF GRATIFICATION ON TEACHERS' DEVELOPMENT

##### A. *Individual career management can enhance competitiveness*

Teaching staff should make a rational career development plan in the beginning, and have a reasonable expectation about how to be an excellent teacher and how to better adapt to this role as well as about future post change. Individual career management can maximize personal development. In the whole career development process, teachers should continuously develop their individual interests and hobbies, cultivate their compressive ability, effectively manage individual development goal and improve overall competitiveness. The significance of individual career management is self-evident. It directly influences individual development space and quality of life.

##### B. *Individual career management can facilitate employees to achieve their value*

The influencing factors of individual career development include the following. Firstly, influence on organizational. The structure, nature, development stage, economic benefit and culture of an organization influence individual career development. Secondly, staff status and degree of acceptance in the organization are also important influencing factors. If the organization accepts individuals, individuals can better accept delay of gratification, and gain stronger sense of achievement in delay of gratification. For teachers, school development and cultural features influence their value exertion and practice, which has direct influence their prospect. Thus, an organization should create more efficient working environment for teachers, form the atmosphere of guiding people educating people and maintaining people, guide teachers to become more excellent and to exert their greatest value, and form a harmonious state.

##### C. *Enhancement of vocational delay of gratification has practical significance for individual career development*

The ultimate purpose of individual career development is to achieve individual career planning. In current social development situation, the responsibility of career development is mostly undertaken by individuals. Employees' job satisfaction is influenced by cultivating their vocational delay of gratification. In practical teaching process, teachers should actively carry out vocational

exploration, establish correct vocational goal and strategy and enhance teachers' vocational delay of gratification through self-study, self-presentation and interpersonal relationship coordination. Besides, teachers are willing to make efforts to gain greater vocational achievements. Such conscious guidance is called "career guidance" training or "development training" and stresses training system arrangement according to employees' development needs. It can be implemented by stages. Through the education and training with strong purpose, they can achieve career planning, promote self-development, meet psychological need of self-actualization and then form a set of incentive measures.

#### V. CONCLUSION

Individual career management is a profound science. Favorable teachers' career management can effectively promote teaching work and also contribute to achievement of teachers' value. Under the background of knowledge-based economy, it is especially important to do career management well. Career planning and management work refers to a complete set of systems, rather than a set of rules or regulations. It does not restrain and restrict employees, but continuously motivates employees' potential, promotes their success of career, improves individual post promotion, enhances work efficiency and creativity, and achieves dual development of organizations and individuals.

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