



## Empirical test of the moderating role of proactive personality and mediating role of developmental idiosyncratic deals on managing job content plateau

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**Abstract.** *Purpose.* This study examines the impact of job content plateau on the professional development of a group of employees. It looks at the likelihood that workers going through a job content plateau would decide to make developmental idiosyncratic bargains to affect their careers. People can handle the adverse effects of job content plateau and boost their career commitment through developmental idiosyncratic deals as an employee's psychological contract for learning new skills. This study evaluated the moderating effect of a proactive personality, which is a component of positive psychology because individuals with proactive personalities are more likely to choose developmental idiosyncratic deals. *Study design.* By using survey at three points of times, information was gathered from 421 executives working in various industries throughout India. A hierarchical multiple regression analysis was performed to evaluate the hypotheses in this case. *Findings.* According to the study's findings, developmental idiosyncratic deals serve as a mediating factor that can trigger the link between job content plateau and career commitment via proactive personality. In this study, career commitment, proactive personality, developmental idiosyncratic deals, and job content plateau merged into a single model by using empirical data from Indian executives. *Implications for practice.* Offer some recommendations for increasing employee's career commitment and avoiding job content plateau by facilitating developmental ideals. Research limitations. Indian employees made up the sample of respondents. Additionally, the majority of them are in the middle of their career. These particular characteristics limit how widely other trail samples and countries will adopt these findings. *Value of the results.* Overall, the model provides a strategy based on applied psychology's developmental aspect and proactive personality to deal with the adverse effects of job content plateau.

**Keywords:** job content plateau, proactive personality, developmental idiosyncratic deals, psychological contract, career commitment.

## Introduction

Worldwide technological disruptions, and automations are driving organizations to focus on restructuring and emphasizing a lean and efficient workforce (Baruch, 2003; Greco and Kraimer, 2020). This has led to flat structure and reduced number of workforces in organizations. As an aftermath, the employees have few promotional opportunities and hence reduced career growth (Elsass, Ralston, 1989). Most individuals attain mastery in their work or job role within three years (Harju et al., 2016) and holding on to the same position for a longer period might create discomfort to oneself and others in many ways. Firstly, individuals may perceive that they are not progressing in their careers because they lack skill and knowledge or lack opportunities. Secondly, sticking to a job position for long may send signal to other employees that the individual does not have the potential and capability to be promoted to a higher position. Having such a perspective can trigger negative and depressing thoughts (Lin et al., 2018). Thirdly, individuals who think of their work as monotonous and boring consider their organizations to be less supportive of their career path (Armstrong, Nancy, 2009). Contrarily, individuals who get the opportunity to progress in their career by handling complex assignments or acquiring new skills and competencies perceive their employer as supportive (Nkomo et al., 2017; Zhong et al., 2016).

Career plateau is a stage in one's career where the chance of getting a vertical promotion is minimal (FERENCE et al., 1977). It engulfs a state of negative emotions, especially irritation and helplessness, while overcoming obstructions in their career progress path (Rotondo, Perrewe, 2000). Career plateau is of two types (1) Hierarchical plateau, which refers to unavailability of vertical promotion opportunities and (2) job career plateau (JCP), in which an employee lacks challenging work and new learning opportunities (Bardwick, 1986; Nicholson, 1993). Modern-day organizations have reduced hierarchies leading to fewer job levels where individuals experience hierarchical plateau (Burke, Mikkelsen, 2006; Wickramasinghe, Jayaweera, 2010; Xia, Xie, 2011). Further hierarchical plateau has attracted many researchers (Armstrong-Stassen, 2008; Lapalme et al., 2009; Xie, Lu, Zhou, 2015), whereas JCP has received little attention from the career plateau researchers (Armstrong et al., 2009; McCleese, Eby, 2006).

It is important that it receives due attention from researchers as JCP often results in negative employee attitudes (Armstrong et al., 2009; McCleese, Eby, 2006; Kao, et al., 2022). In the changing business environment where restructuring and downsizing is unavoidable, the issue of JCP becomes very pertinent (Hofsetter, Cohen, 2014; McCleese, Eby, 2006). Though most of the studies have highlighted the adverse results of plateauing (Chao, 1990), some researchers indicated that plateauing may not always lead to dysfunctional consequences (FERENCE et al., 1997; Nicholson, 1993). Through proper policies, employees can be oriented to handle JCP by developing a practical approach and exercising self-control in one's psychological orientation towards the job and taking charge of one's career (McCleese et al., 2007; Milliman, 1993).

People confronting with plateau can ponder the eventual scope of their vocation, including undertakings that will encourage them to create dynamic aptitudes, take part in exercises that will drive their exploring and curious practices, and lead themselves in upgrading fearlessness to defeat professional obstructions (Jiang, 2016). Further, individuals with proactive personalities are a form of individual exclusive resources, explore opportunities, show activity, make a move, and protect until they conclude by realizing change (Harvey et al., 2006). Proactive individuals will, in general, recognize chances to alter tasks at work and proceed upon those driving forces (Crant, 2000). From the insights of some researchers, working out I-deals is also a type of proactive behavior, which can initiate various forms of starting and influencing constructive changes at work and in business

correspondence (Crant, 2000; Parker, Collins, 2010). Research shows that employees who are capable cognitively and intellectually can cope with job-related problems by proactively looking for different opportunities for skill development and will find compelling ways at work (Hofsetter, Cohen, 2014; Mcleese, Eby, 2006). Allocating ideals to employees who are high performers also helps in increasing the commitment of individuals.

After doing an extensive literature review, three research gaps have been identified. First, data-driven factual analysis is required to acknowledge how business establishments can reduce the occurrence of JCP (Jiang, Wang, 2018). Secondly, no research has been conducted to determine the positive aspects of JCP leading to career commitment (CC) through developmental Ideals. Thirdly, since developmental idiosyncratic (D-I) deals are related to custom-made settings that impart the I-deal receiver with aid to career and intensify opportunities for learning and growth (Sylvie Guerrero et al., 2016), individuals having a proactive personality (PP) and career consciousness will only opt for developmental I-deals (Guerrero, Bentein, 2022). Developmental human resources (HR) practises are concerned with an employee's growth and development (Ahmed et al., 2020). Further, individuals who receive developmental I-deals appear to be valuable contributors to the organization as I-deals are given only to the chosen few who have taken the initiative and proven their worth.

Granting developmental ideals is a win-win condition for the employee, and the employer as it fulfills mutual obligations in terms of the employee's fulfillment of personal goals and aspirations and the supervisor's expectations of enhanced performance and employee motivation (Hornung et al., 2008), leading to enhanced organizational commitment. Proactive employees take several initiatives to overcome the adverse situation (Seibert et al., 2001; Thompson, 2005) like enhancing professional networks, or undergoing development programs (Major et al., 2006) to advance their careers (Maria et al., 2022). Employees who adjust to changing labour markets and organizational structures change their work values and behaviors. They are also responsible for the majority of their own career planning and management (Rahim, Rohaida, 2016). They are resilient in their career and hold on to it inspite of facing all odds (Kidd, Green, 2006). Since CC is described as "one's attitude towards one's profession or vocation" (Blau, 1985; Poulouse, Dhal, 2020) or as "one's motivation to work in a chosen profession" (Carson, Bedeian, 1994), the researchers have been postulated that individuals keen on taking extra efforts and having the resilience to chase their one's own career goals may have elevated levels of CC (Goulet, Singh, 2002).

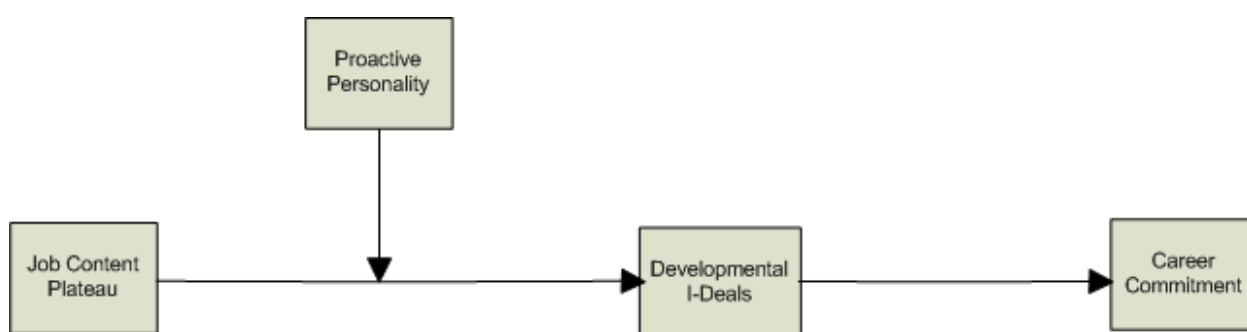


Figure 1. The proposed research framework model (source: the authors)

In today's world, where individuals are working in a highly uncertain and unpredictable environment, they know that they cannot keep on working in one organization for their entire working life, and hence they should focus more on CC rather than organization commitment (Dries et al., 2008; Kuijpers et al., 2006; Van der Heijden et al., 2022). This perspective further enhances the significance of CC (Noordin et al., 2002). Therefore, the focus of this research is on developing

a model for mitigating the negative effects of JCP through proactive employee behaviour, such as developmental I-deals leading to CC. In today's changing career environment and heterogeneous career patterns, individuals need to construct their meaning of work (Akkermans, Tims, 2017; Duffly et al., 2016). In light of this, the current study focuses on the moderating role of PP and the mediating role of ideals in the relationship between JCP and CC. The proposed model is depicted in figure 1.

## Theoretical support

This study is based on the Job Demand-Resources Theory (JDR), which predicts job burnout, commitment, work satisfaction, and engagement (Bakker, Demerouti, 2007). One noteworthy feature of this theory's use in this paper is its adaptability. As mentioned in theory, employment conditions or job nature may be molded by combining job demand and job resources, both validly used in all work situations and can be tailored to specific job requirements. The visible, emotional, social, and organizational aspects of work that necessitate physical and psychological exertion and physiological and psychological consequences are referred to as job demand (Demerouti et al., 2001). Even if employment demands aren't always bleak, they might create obstacles for employees if they aren't well equipped to deal with the high-effort needs (Meijman, Mulder, 2013). Job resources are the visual, emotional, collective, and organizational aspects of a job that aid in attaining job goals, decreasing negative consequences of job demand, and leading to personal accomplishment, learning, and growth (Bakker, 2011; Bakker, Demerouti, 2007). As a result, resources are important not just for meeting job expectations but also for personal development. Furthermore, the JD-R theory recognizes an individual's worthiness, and in situations where the organization has other priorities, and managers are not always available for rapid response, individuals must be proactive and organize their resources properly (Bakker, Demerouti, 2014).

To put it another way, people with a strong PP or a somewhat stable desire to affect environmental change (Bateman, Crant, 1993) will attempt to control the world around them through a personalized effort (Bakker et al., 2012). Individuals might bargain with their employers for developmental opportunities in organizations (Hornung et al., 2008). Developmental I-deals are customized and help employees develop their skills, and abilities and accomplish personal goals for professional or career growth through challenging job assignments, individualized performance recognition, specific training, and career prospects (Rousseau, Kim, 2006). It has been seen that only proactive people opt for developmental I-deals (Liao et al., 2016). Persons will have better professional commitment because they are willing to put in extra effort and are resilient towards their job and goals (Goulet, Singh, 2002; Kidd, Green, 2006). This work proposes that proactive persons utilize developmental I-deals as job resources to mitigate the impact of JCP, which is a negative job demand. Moreover, it identifies D-I deals as a mediating condition that can activate the association between JCP and CC through PP.

## Literature review

It is known that D-I deals has a positive impact on employee relations, and they create higher employee support in terms of better work and commitment (Hornung et al., 2008). D-I deals are deals that are used by exceptional performers to take advantage of developmental opportunities to enhance their knowledge and abilities to progress in their careers (Liao et al., 2016). Career I-deal, which is developmental in nature, relates to a self-driven learning process that is associated with development and futuristic employment opportunities, thereby putting a positive impact on CC or advancement (Hall, Mirvis, 1995).

D-I deals give extraordinary chances to people to utilize and develop their insight and abilities leading to career success (Hornung et al., 2010). They act as a catalyst in enhancing significant individual commitments such as better performance, and higher responsibility (Hornung et al., 2008). Previous studies also shows a link between D-I deals and organizational commitment for two reasons. One, people who opt for developmental i-deals might consider themselves as privileged and valued as only chosen ones are given this opportunity. This belief would lead to organizational commitment (Hornung et al., 2008; Hornung et al., 2010) which has been defined as the extent to which employees are psychologically attached to their organizations (Allen, Meyer, 1990). Second, and critically, the grant of D-I deals may strengthen individuals' trust in their supervisors and cement the bond between them (Rousseau, 2005). The career-related parts of organizational variables are perceived as affecting the degree of organizational commitment of the representatives, and when a worker feels that a company gains through career-related practices, their attachment towards the organization likewise improves (Gaertner, Nollen, 1989). Organizational commitment is an important individual variable that leads to CC (London, 1983). Individuals who are committed to their organizations take extra efforts to remain committed to their careers (Goulet, Singh, 2002) as well. Organizational chances for advancement might upgrade one's vocation development or identify with a career (Hall, 1971). Hence, it states that D-I deals will be positively related to career commitment.

Individuals with proactiveness take actions on their own and vigorously work to change their work surroundings and pursue new knowledge and training so that they can enhance their presentation at work (Bateman, Crant, 1993). Proactive individuals possess the inclination to recommend new methods of doing work and engender new ways to improve their enterprise and work (Jafri, et al., 2016). Proactive individuals do not wait for information or the possibilities that would approach them (Crant, 2000); instead, it is the initiative that leads to considerable knowledge or awareness and behavior patterns, like recognizing fresh concepts and enhancing their work procedures, upgrading their abilities (Seibert et al., 2001). Proactive behavior is progressively expected in organizations and thereby benefitting both the individual and employer (Grant, Ashford, 2008; Griffin et al., 2007). The procedure of bargaining an i-deal could take the shape of proactive behavior as individuals are generally liable for bargaining these personalized work agreements (Liao et al., 2016).

I-deals or D i-deals are demonstrations of career ambition, which is, proactive behavior is linked to the ability enhancement of the employees (Hall, Mirvis, 1995; Seibert et al., 2001). Those individuals, who opt for career advancement, adopt D-I deals or D-I deals which are unique chances for them to increase their capabilities and knowledge (Liao et al., 2016). It shows that those employees, who are proactive, go for these challenges for their career advancements and these proactive employees hardly get affected by JCP. Proactive people are dynamic representatives who differentiate and hold on to an opportunity that derives the change in their surroundings by improving their present conditions or making new ones (Bateman, Crant, 1993). Proactive people tend to start on their own (Frese et al., 1996), they are forward-looking (Parker et al., 2006), and those who continue with procedures until their goals are attained (Crant, 2000). Proactive nature can be beneficial for one's profession, as it is associated with presentation (Crant, 1995), work adjustment (Kammeyer-Mueller, Wanberg, 2003), and external and internal career success (Seibert et al., 1999; Seibert et al., 2001). People can purposely and instantly change their present conditions, comprising their social surroundings (Buss, 1987; Diener et al., 1984).

Proactive people who are usually changing and action-oriented have a higher degree to handle career-linked changes energetically, inspect personal growth opportunities and make job circumstances for their professional requirements (Bateman, Crant, 1993; Tolentino et al., 2014). Proactive people are also inclined toward networking (Thompson, 2005), probably proactive people

are engrossed in networking behavior because it allows them to effectively accomplish various good results in their organization or their career (Fuller Jr. et al., 2009). There is a beneficial relationship between PP and organizational commitment (Chan, 2006; Fuller Jr. et al., 2009). There is also a link between PP and CC, as career committed proactive people are looking for different possibilities by presenting changes that meet their necessities, here the organization can provide these proactive people with adequate decision flexibility (Vandenberghe, Ok, 2013). According to research, a PP emphasized the optimistic outcomes of career plateaus on psychological debility and turnover intentions when undergoing JCPs but is not hierarchical (Wang et al., 2014). As outlined earlier, a PP is a stable comparative proclivity that motivates individuals to act on measures to affect their surroundings (Jiang, 2017). Proactive people recognize various possibilities and act on them, conduct initiatives, and continue until they produce a significant change (Bateman, Crant's, 1993; Scott et al., 1999). The bargaining of an ideal is proactive, as people are liable for bargaining these personalized work agreements (Anand et al., 2010). The capability of i-deal helps employers entice, encourage, and keep those who carry out nicely at the workplace (Anand et al., 2010). By creating opportunities for people to use their skills in the midst of the crisis, proactive individuals will produce motivational resources connected to their jobs. Drawing from the positive psychology research tradition (Linley, Harrington, 2006; Wood et al., 2011) strengths utilization refers to a person's distinctive qualities and talents that, when activated, are stimulating and allow performance at one's best (e.g., Seligman, Csikszentmihalyi, 2000; Seligman et al., 2005).

According to the previous research, these developmental I-deals are anticipated to create a much more positive impact on the contract of employment as compared to flexibility ideals (Rousseau et al., 2009). A further positive connection is found between organizational commitment and CC (Blau, 1985; Darden et al., 1989; Steffy, Jones, 1988). Advancement for organizational opportunity is assumed to be implicitly affecting CC through organizational commitment and career gratification (Aryee, Tan, 1992). Organizational opportunity for development or advancement might improve an individual's career growth or acquire capabilities essential to an individual's career role (Hall, 1971). Moreover, there is a positive critical link between CC and organizational commitment (Aryee, Tan, 1992). Organizations that plan and encourage the ideals or principles of a profession and introduce these principles in their employees, then the output of this would augment both CC and organizational commitment. From the above discussion it is found that the proactive behavior is a medium between JCP and D-I deals. Henceforward, proactive behaviour will be moderated the relationship between JCP and D-I deals such that the relationship is weaker at higher (versus lower) levels of D-I deals.

Development for organizational opportunity is pretended to be indirectly influencing CC through organizational commitment and career indulgence (Aryee, Tan, 1992). Individuals might smartly restructure their jobs by picking out works, negotiating a distinct job content, and allocating importance to the jobs (Parker, Ohly, 2009). Similarly, D I-deals are used in the structure or configuration of a well-thought-out career framework, which increases and escalates the benefits which are presented by the organization (Rousseau et al., 2009). Particularly, the desire to obtain employability/career development i-deals may indicate that employees have accepted the new psychological contract and are taking charge of their own growth (Hiltrop, 1995). D-I deals lead to CC as it is a proactive behavior that is related to capability development and proficient arrangement (Hall Mirvis, 1995; Seibert et al., 2001). These career ideals demonstrate professional enterprise, which is proactive behavior linked to ability advancement and professional planning (Hall, Mirvis, 1995; Seibert et al., 2001), which is also linked to developmental ideals (Hornung et al., 2014). Developmental I-deals are made in the framework of a well-designed career structure, which is possible increases and boosts the advantages that are provided by the organization (Rousseau et al., 2009). So based on the above discussion, D-I deals will be fully mediated the relation betwixt JCP

and CC. Formerly, D-I deals will be fully mediated the relation betwixt JCP and CC contingent upon proactive behaviour.

## Methodology of study

### Hypothesis

Based on the earlier discussion in the literature review section regarding the relationship between developmental idiosyncratic deals, job content plateau, career commitment and proactive personality, the following hypotheses have been formulated.

*H1: D-I deals will positively relate to CC.*

*H2: Proactive behaviour would moderate the relationship between JCP, and D-I deals such that the relationship is weaker at higher (versus lower) levels of D-I deals.*

*H3: D-I deals will fully mediate the relation betwixt JCP and career commitment.*

*H4: D-I deals will fully mediate the relation betwixt JCP and CC contingent upon Proactive Behaviour.*

### Data collection

The respondents in this study were executives working across different set-ups like changing from operations, maintenance, engineering, finance, HR (HRD), Marketing, etc. Three influxes of information assortment were applied to decrease the potential basic strategy predisposition (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Here, it is clarified that the objective behind this study and the stages engaged with information assortment to the executives. In the first-wave survey (T1), employees stated their JCP, proactive personality, and demographic and other control factors. In the second-wave survey (T2), employees who had restored the total first-wave questionnaires were reviewed again and requested to rate their developmental idiosyncratic deals. In the third-wave survey (T3), executives just the individuals who had restored the total first-and second-wave questionnaires, were reviewed. They were approached to rate on their career commitment.

Table 1. Responses at each time point

Time	Response rate of survey	Amount
Time 1 (T1)	No of distributed questionnaire	700
	No of returned questionnaire	632
Time 2 (T2)	No of returned questionnaire	530
Time 3 (T3)	No of returned questionnaire	437
	Returned and excluded questionnaires	16
	Final Response	421
	Valid response rate	60.14%

Information was gathered by means of the accompanying method. The human resource manager or senior administration individuals from different organizations assisted us with getting sorted out a haphazardly chosen list of employees. Surveys were then conveyed to the employees through both on the web and disconnected mode according to aptness. The researcher guaranteed the privacy of their information and featured that the survey intended to acknowledge human resource practices and academic purposes. Table 1 shows the response rate of survey at each time wave. Therefore, the final response rate of 60.14% at time three point is accepted for further analysis in this study as a response rate of 30 percent is sufficient for analysis (Sekaran, 2003). Table 2 shows the demographic profile of 421 respondents in this study.

Table 2. Demographic profile of 421 respondents

	Respondent Details	Frequency (%)
Gender	Male	246 (58.4)
	Female	175 (41.6)
Age	26–35	273 (64.8)
	36–45	140 (33.3)
	46–5	08 (1.9)
Education	Graduate	175 (41.6)
	Post Graduate	237 (56.3)
	Ph.D.	009 (2.1)
Total years of experience	under 3	22 (5.3)
	3–5	215 (51.1)
	6–8	140 (33.3)
	9–11	34 (8.1)
	12–14	10 (2.2)
Length of years in same job role	under 3	23 (5.46)
	3–5	284 (67.46)
	6–8	102 (24.23)
	9–11	8 (1.90)
	12–14	4 (0.95)

## Measures

**Job Content Plateau.** We used six-item scale to measure JCP during T1. Executives rated the item on a five-point scale (“1” — “strongly agree” to «5» — “strongly disagree”). Sample question include “I will not be challenged in my current job” (Milliman, 1992). The Cronbach’s coefficient alpha  $\alpha$  (internal consistency) for this measure is 0.884.

**Proactive Personality.** We used six-item scale to measure PP during T1. Executives rated the item on a five-point scale (“1” — “strongly agree” to “5” — “strongly disagree”). Sample questions include “I excel at identifying opportunities” (Bateman, Crant, 1993). The coefficient alpha (internal consistency)  $\alpha$  for this measure is 0.879.

**Developmental Idiosyncratic Deals.** We used four-item scale to measure the negotiation and obtainment of D-I deals during T2. Executives rated the item on a 5-point scale (“1” — “strongly agree” to “5” — “strongly disagree”). Sample questions include “My employer and I have successfully negotiated a unique arrangement that allows me special opportunities for skill development” (Rosen, 2013). The coefficient alpha (internal consistency)  $\alpha$  for this measure is 0.871.

**Career Commitment.** We used seven-item scale to evaluate CC measures during T3. Executives rated the item on a five-point scale (“1” — “strongly agree” to “5” — “strongly disagree”). Sample questions include “I definitely want a career for myself in the profession” (Blau, 1985a). The coefficient alpha (internal consistency)  $\alpha$  for this measure is 0.918.

**Control variables.** Age, educational value, marital status, position level, and total years of experience were utilized as controls since they have been demonstrated to influence career plateau (Allen et al., 1998; Yang et al., 2018).

## Results and discussion

### Confirmatory factor analysis

In this study, before inspecting the data Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) with AMOS 25 is used to establish whether convergent and discriminant validity existed between the constructs. Here,



a four-factor model comprising JCP, PP, developmental idiosyncratic deals, and CC was analyzed. All relevant constructs were included in the measurement model, and latent constructs were allowed to covary directly (Anderson, Gerbing, 1988). The outputs exhibit that all other possible models yielded a poor fit to the data and the fit was significantly inferior to the four-factor model. The four-factor model yielded a good fit for the data  $\chi^2(179) = 393.56$ , RMSEA = 0.045, NFI = 0.95, NNFI = 0.95, CFI = 0.97; TLI = 0.967 in line with the recommendations of L. T. Hu and P. M. Bentler (1999). As shown in Table III, all path loadings from latent constructs were significant, confirming their convergent validity. These CFA results hold up the validity of the study instrument for subsequent perusal.

The current study additionally looked at convergent validity to see if the items accurately described the variance in their respective domains. According to J. F. Hair with colleagues and L. T. Hu and P. M. Bentler, all constructs have convergent validity larger than 0.50, indicating that the Average Variance Explained is acceptable (AVE) (Hair et al., 2014; Hu, Bentler, 1999). According to J. F. Hair with colleagues the assessment of discriminant validity for all components in this research work is greater than 0.70, which is satisfactory (Hair et al., 2014). As stated in Table IV, the composite reliability (CR) was also evaluated to see if the constructions were internally consistent. All of the criteria resulted in acceptable CR of greater than 0.70 (Nunnally and Bernstein, 1994).

Table 3. Outputs of confirmatory factor analysis

Variable		<i>df</i>	RMSEA	NFI	NNFI	CFI	TLI	$\chi^2(df)$
1. Four-factor model	393.56	302	.045	.95	.95	.97	.96	
2. Three-factor model	842.06	308	.121	.91	.93	.93	.78	458.41**(7)
3. Two-factor model	745.00	312	.092	.90	.90	.90	.82	379.43**(11)
4. One-factor model	813.40	323	.181	.87	.88	.86	.41	1511.13**(22)

**Note.** *N* = 421, \*\* — *p* < .01. RMSEA — root mean square error of approximation; CFI — comparative fit index; TLI — Tucker — Lewis index; NFI — Normed Fit Index; NNFI — Non-Normed Fit Index; Dash Indicates no model comparison is applied.

a) four factors include JCP, D-I deals, proactive personality, career commitment; b) we constrained JCP and D-I deals to be part of the same factor; c) we forced JCP, D-I deals, and PP to be the same factor; d) all measuring items were combined into one grand factor.

Table 4. Factor loadings, validity and reliability

Items of variables	Estimate	AVE	$\sqrt{AVE}$	CR	Items of variables	Estimate	AVE	$\sqrt{AVE}$	CR
JCP6	.717	.549	.74	.87	DID4	.732	.655	.809	.88
JCP5	.721				DID3	.788			
JCP4	.702				DID2	.834			
JCP3	.812				DID1	.878			
JCP2	.768				CC7	.878	.615	.784	.91
JCP1	.721				CC6	.682			
PP6	.814	.594	.770	.897	CC5	.668			
PP5	.823				CC4	.922			
PP4	.772				CC3	.879			
PP3	.742				CC2	.732			
PP2	.713				CC1	.684			
PP1	.758								

### Descriptive statistics

It is evident from table V, that D-I deals antagonistically correlated with JCP, however, assuredly with CC, manifesting the role of D-I deals as an expository variable. D-I deals and CC demonstrated a remarkable efficacious correlation with the degree of PP, highlighting the substance of PP in the place of work. The results from correlation analysis give initial evidence for hypothesized relationships pointing to the further analysis of the mediating role of D-I deals.

Table 5. Descriptive statistics, reliability and intercorrelations of all measures

Variables	Cronbach alpha	N	Mean	Std dev	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
1. Age	-	421	33.46	6.65										
2. Gender	-	421	0.87	0.38	0.13**									
3. Marital status	-	421	0.88	0.29	0.37**	-0.02								
4. Education	-	421	0.29	0.42	0.03	-0.27**	0.23**							
5. Length of service	-	421	0.59	0.39	0.26**	0.24**	0.44**	-0.69**						
6. Position	-	421	3.23	1.42	0.78**	0.21**	0.41**	0.05	0.21**					
7. Tenure in current job role	-	421	2.32	0.69	-0.13**	0.17**	-0.06	-0.07*	0.06	-0.07*				
8. Jcp	0.884	421	4.16	1.23	-0.06	0.06	-0.02	-0.02	0.02	-0.03	0.37**			
9. Did	0.933	421	3.52	1.41	0.21**	0.03	0.06	0.04	0.02	0.15**	-0.62**	-0.66**		
10. Cc	0.918	421	4.17	1.29	0.18**	-0.02	0.08*	0.01	0.04	0.13**	-0.44**	-0.47**	0.67**	
11. Pp	0.909	421	4.11	1.07	0.15**	0.02	0.07	0.11.08*	-0.04	0.10**	0.52**	-0.46**	0.78**	0

**Mediating role of developmental idiosyncratic deals**

Using hierarchical multiple regression analysis, a mediation analysis was conducted to estimate the effect of D-I deals in the relationship between JCP and CC. The control and study variables were entered into different steps of the equation to test *H1* and *H3*. Using the Sobel (1982) test, the statistical significance of the mediation was confirmed. JCP was strongly and adversely connected to career commitment, as shown in Table 6. Hence, supporting hypothesis 1. Indirection association between work content plateau and D-I deals was found to be significant, indicating that a high JCP is associated with low developmental idiosyncratic deals, confirming hypothesis 3. The indirect relationship between D-I deals and CC was also significant, showing that fewer D-I deals linked to poor career commitment. It's also possible.

Table 6. Mediating role of developmental idiosyncratic deals

	Developmental I deals			Career Commitment	
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
Step 1: control variable					
Age	.16*	.15**	.17*	.17*	.09
Gender	.11***	.11***	.06	.05	-.01
Marital Status	-.03	.01	.01	.03	.03
Education	-.02	-.03	.02	-.01	.02
Length of service	-.04	-.05	-.06	-.06	-.04
Tenure in current job role	-.62***	-.43***	-.44***	-.29***	-.05
Step2: main effect					
Job content plateau		-.48***		-.38***	-.09*
Step 3: mediating variable					
Developmental idiosyncratic deals					.58***
<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	.38	.58	.22	.33	.47
Change in <i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	.38	.21	.22	.12	.15
Overall <i>F</i>	88.41	169.25	36.70	56.48	88.41
Change in <i>F</i>	87.41	404.89	36.70	139.47	211.63

Note: entries are standardized regression coefficient.

### Moderating role of proactive personality

To reduce the impact of multicollinearity, all the predictors were normalized before the analysis to yield product terms. Table 7 shows the moderating influence of PP on the relationship between work content plateau and developmental idiosyncratic bargains as assessed by hierarchical multiple regression analysis. The findings accounted for 75% of the variance in Developmental idiosyncratic Deals. It also showed that a PP and JCP were both significantly associated with developmental idiosyncratic deals, implying that employees with high proactive personalities will have high developmental idiosyncratic deals, supporting hypothesis 2. After controlling for the impact of control factors, the moderating effect of JCP and PP was also shown to be significant.

Table 7. Moderating role of proactive personality

	Developmental I deals			
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Step 1: control variable				
Age	.16*	.15**	.08	.09
Gender	.11**	.11***	.06**	.07**
Marital status	-.03	.01	-.03	-.03
Education	-.02	-.03	.03	.02
Length of service	-.03	-.05	.02	.01
Tenure in current job role	-.62***	-.43***	-.23***	-.22***
Step2: main effect				
Job content plateau		-.48***	-.36***	-.38***
Step 3: moderator variable				
Proactive personality			.48***	.52***
Step 4: moderating effect of proactive personality Job content plateau proactive personality				.08***
$R^2$	.38	.58	.76	.76
Change in $R^2$	.38	.21	.16	.008
Overall $F$	88.39	171.27	297.28	273.79
Change in $F$	88.39	406.92	478.74	22.36

Note: entries are standardized regression coefficients.

We plotted the moderation effects using simple slopes, as shown in Figure 2.

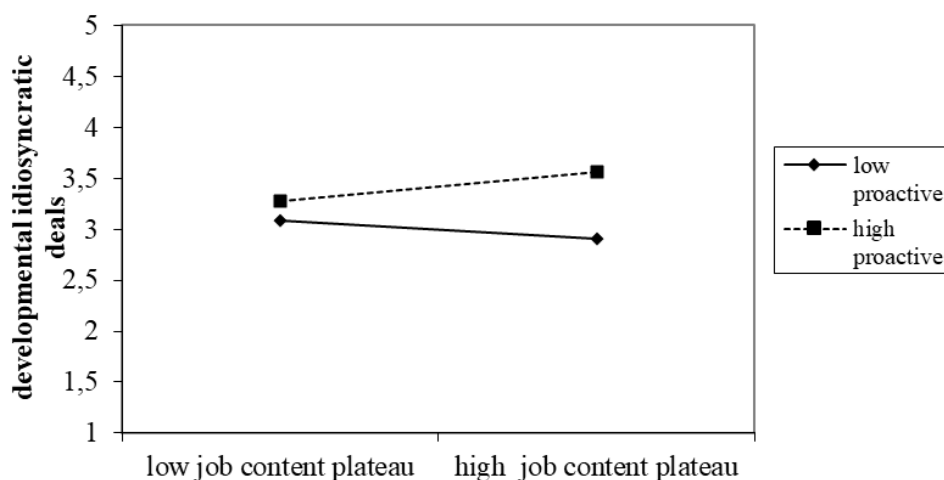


Figure 2. Moderating effect of proactive personality on the relationship between developmental i-deals and job content plateau (source: author's own statistical analysis output)

The data suggesting a link between JCP and D-I deals are influenced by an employee's level of proactiveness, and the relationship can change depending on the employee's proactiveness. The effect size of the moderation analysis is determined to be quite minimal in this study (approximately one percent). However, previous research has shown that interactions accounting for even 1% of the variance are significant, as the interaction effect in social science studies typically accounts for 1–3% of the variance (McClelland, Judd, 1993). When PP is high, the negative association between JCP and developing idiosyncratic deals is weaker, compared to average and low supporting hypothesis 2.

This research examined the relationships among JCP, D-I deals, PP and CC. It is established that PP moderated the outcome of JCP on CC via D-I deals. More Specifically, there is a full mediation effect of D-I deals among JCP and CC (hypotheses 1 and 3). Lastly, we found support for a moderation effect of PP in the relationship between JCP and CC through D-I deals (hypothesis 2 and 4).

## **Implications and limitations**

### **Theoretical implications**

This investigation has many speculations for subsequent research and theory. First, the collected data were indicates that D-I deals as a pivotal intervening variable to understand and handle the career plateau; as a result, the employee will proactively manage their career (Hornung et al., 2010). In the way of dealing own career through proactive personality, here these findings identified the D-I deals as the mediating mechanism through which JCP can lead to career commitment. As per the theoretical rationale, an individual with a high PP will opt for D-I deals to manage their own career to fit with their skill and knowledge (Srikanth et al., 2020; Valls et al., 2020). Also, support the understanding of how individuals with proactive personalities achieve positive career outcomes (Bindl et al., 2012). Secondly, it has been seen that people with a PP are more likely to start D-I deals in their careers, which increases their commitment to their careers. So, it added to a previous study that showed how people with proactive personalities can deal with JCPs by choosing developmental deals that are unique to them (Hornung et al., 2019). In the present study, the negative effect of JCP are managed through PP and developmental idiosyncratic deals. More study is certainly required to elucidate the factors that frame the moderator role of proactive personality. Hence, this analysis suggests that employees will be more committed to their careers if they have both proactive personalities and developmental deals. Consistent with career self-management, the outcomes imply that opting for D-I deals is high when PP is high and obstructive effect of JCP will be managed to lead to career commitment. So, this study adds to literature reviews of CC by identifying antecedents like JCP and developmental idiosyncratic deals. By doing this, we come up with establishing a further overall model for handling JCP.

### **Practical implications**

This research outputs have comprehensible pragmatic considerations that are mainly important, keeping in mind the environment where this investigation was administered (executives across India). As found and referred to above, from the data collected (2020), the 64.84 % percentage of younger generation between 25 and 35 years old and also 51.06 % of people are in same job role for 3–6 years. Thus, planning for policy to increase career management and reduce JCP among young executives should be welcomed. In this regard, our results propose some resourcefulness. Considering the mediating role of D-I deals in the interconnection between JCP and the observed outcome of career management, employers' human resource department need to assist employees in progressing their potential and stimulation to get hold of their succeeding professional careers by opting for developmental idiosyncratic deals. These types of steps could increase the chance that

employees will not be bored in a job, for which they do not perceive being job content plateaued. The moderator role of PP perceived here recommends that employer should motivate employee to be proactive in their personality so that they can precisely use and develop their capabilities which will refrain them from being job content plateaued. Organization's Human Resource Department can implement this by identifying potential employees with PP who can be granted developmental idiosyncratic deals. Organizations can make employees aware of the benefits of opting for D-I deals in order to enhance their career path. This will influence their career commitment.

### Limitations

The study has a number of limitations, but they provide important information for future research.

1. First, the sample respondents were comprised of employees from India. Moreover, the maximum of them is at the mid-level of their career. These specific features limit the universal acceptability of our recommendations to the other trail samples and nations.

2. Second, the respondents were mix from various sectors, so findings can't be generalized for one specific industry.

3. Third, we examined time-lagged design where the responses of different participants were taken at three assessment points. Both the independent variable and moderator variable were measured at Time 1, which may have dilated their interrelation.

### Conclusion

The present study revealed that, how people deals with job content plateau. To overcome a plateau in job content, proactive professionals negotiate and obtain developmental i-deals to engage in challenging projects. So, organizations may sponsor i-deals for proactive employees who demonstrate a desire to take on additional responsibilities. As a result of the adoption of developmental idiosyncratic deals, both the company and the individual employee can strengthen career commitment. In sum, our study come up with explaining why and how PP is constructively related to D-I deals and CC of employees and negatively related to JCP. Moreover, it identifies D-I deals as a mediating condition that can activate the association between JCP and CC through proactive personality.

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# Эмпирическая проверка модерирующей роли проактивной личности и медирующей роли идиосинкразических сделок, связанных с развитием, в управлении стабилизацией содержания работы

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**Аннотация.** *Цель.* В данном исследовании рассматривается влияние стабилизации содержания работы на профессиональное развитие группы сотрудников. В нём рассматривается вероятность того, что работники, переживающие стабилизацию содержания работы, решат пойти на идиосинкразические сделки, связанные с развитием, чтобы повлиять на свою карьеру. Люди могут справиться с неблагоприятными последствиями стабилизации содержания работы и повысить свою карьерную приверженность с помощью индивидуальных предложений по развитию, которые являются психологическим контрактом сотрудника на приобретение новых навыков. В этом исследовании оценивался модерационный эффект личностной проактивности, которая является компонентом позитивной психологии, поскольку проактивные люди с большей вероятностью выбирают идиосинкразические действия, направленные на развитие. *Дизайн исследования.* С помощью трехкратного опроса была собрана информация от 421 руководителя, работающего в различных отраслях по всей Индии. Для оценки гипотез в этом случае был проведён иерархический множественный регрессионный анализ. *Выводы.* Согласно результатам исследования, идиосинкразические сделки, связанные с развитием, служат опосредующим фактором, который может усилить связь между состоянием выхода на плато содержания работы и карьерными стремлениями благодаря личностной проактивности. В этом эмпирическом исследовании карьерные обязательства индийских руководителей, проактивность личности, особые условия развития и стабильное содержание работы образуют единую модель. *Последствия для практики.* Предлагаются несколько рекомендаций, как повысить карьерную приверженность сотрудников и избежать стабилизации содержания работы, продвигая идеалы развития. *Ограничения исследования.* Выборку респондентов составили индийские сотрудники. Кроме того, большинство из них находятся в середине своей карьеры. Эти конкретные характеристики ограничивают возможность широкого переноса выводов на другие выборки или страны. *Ценность результатов.* В целом модель обеспечивает стратегию, основанную на аспекте прикладной психологии развития и проактивности личности, для борьбы с неблагоприятными последствиями стабилизации содержания работы.

**Ключевые слова:** стабилизация содержания работы; проактивность личности; особенности развития; психологический контракт; карьерная приверженность.