

The Relationship between Individual Factors and Organizational Support with Career Development

Salasiah Abbas

Norhani Bakri

Faculty of Management,
Universiti Teknologi Malaysia

Abstract

This research focused on the relationship between individual factors and organisational support with career development in particular, self-efficacy, career autonomy, career planning and trainings. The research is a social science case study where the study was conducted at subsidiaries of a property developer. A total of 122 employees were included in this parameter of study. Questionnaires were distributed to the respondents and Spearman Correlation data analysis was used to determine the relationship between the factors and career development. The data shows that career planning and training development factors have low correlation coefficient value and low significance level and that the variables are not linearly related. On the other hand, the data shows that self-efficacy and career autonomy factors have high correlation coefficient value and high significance level which indicates that the variables are linearly related and that there is a relationship between self-efficacy and career autonomy with career development. In conclusion, the findings of this research show that employees perceived that they believe more on themselves to achieve career development through self-efficacy and career autonomy instead of the organization helping them through career planning and training and development.

Keywords: Career development, Self-efficacy, Career autonomy, Career planning

1. Introduction

Changes in today's globalised business world are unprecedented. Since the last two decades, people's career attitudes and experiences have been significantly impacted by the changes in the economic, technology, Internet era, knowledge and business environment. Both employees and employers are concerned about career development and issues related to many areas including individual demographics, economic issues, career patterns, workplace justice, employer responsibilities, individual responsibilities, education as well as training and development. Researchers found that individuals believe that they themselves, through their self-efficacy, must play a role to achieve their career goals. Employees prefer to work independently and be responsible on the outcome of their own work. They believe that

organisations should facilitate and support them throughout the endeavours by providing them with adequate training and development programs, as well as help structure their career planning. In comparison to traditional career development, the current notion of career development is more towards individual career development. Employees now are seeking for promotion, recognition, autonomy, good remuneration, job satisfaction and quality of work life. As stated by Hall (2004), the traditional “organizational” careers that were externally-oriented, emphasising vertical progression through positions defined by the organisation is now shifting to a protean career model based on “self-direction in the pursuit of psychological success in one’s work” where career continues to develop in accordance with individual goals. Current issues of career development lead the researcher to study the relationship between individual factors and organizational support and career development. The research questions aim to understand the relationships between career planning, training and development, self-efficacy and career autonomy and career development.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Previous Research

Saleh (2012) studied the role of human resources practices in improving career development of the NGO staff in the Gaza Strip. This research explored the organization’s and employees’ role in enhancing career development opportunities. The researcher analyzed organizational role through career management, performance appraisal, and training and development practices, while the individual role was examined through the followed approach in career management and individual characteristics, including autonomy, self-efficacy and career competencies. The data collection was achieved through a survey distributed to 100 local and international NGOs who met the required criteria. Total samples of 887 employees were surveyed. The researcher examined the important roles of organizations and individuals in managing and developing careers and reflected the mutual and balanced relation between both. Saleh (2012) found that employees have self-directed protean career but they are usually not using their own values to guide their career. Furthermore, he also found that that training and development practices have impacted career development for employees but with moderate effect, as they are not well aligned to support career development initiatives for individual employees. Lastly, he found that employees with high self-efficacy are able to enhance their career development.

Meanwhile, Bambacas (2010) studied the relationship between two aspects of career management – the practice of career development activities by the organization (organizational career development) and career development activities by the individual (career self-management). She aimed to investigate whether career management practices influence affective and normative commitment according to the value that individuals place on opportunities for continuous learning provided by the organization. The study provided empirical evidence drawn from 196 manager members of the Australian Institute of Management. Hierarchical moderated regression analysis was used to test the hypothesized relationships of the model. Bambacas (2010) found that levels of commitment improved when organizations provided continuous learning to managers. This was the case, for career management both by the individual, and by the organization. The results of her hypothesis testing suggested that career management in either form (managed by the organization or by the individual) plays an important role in facilitating employee commitment to the

organization. Her findings also implied that individuals may become more attached and feel obligated towards the organization when the organization provides opportunities for them to manage their own careers. Similar to Saleh's (2012) research where he examined the importance of self-directed career management in NGOs, Bambacas' (2010) paper highlighted the importance of the value that individuals place on career management practices. It also had drawn attention to career self-management as a positive organizational initiative.

Ismail and Ramly (2011) also studied the influence of self-efficacy, organizational socialization and continuous improvement practices on the career aspirations of R&D professionals in government research institutes and multinational corporations (MNCs) in Malaysia. The study involved 164 respondents from government research institutes and 120 respondents from MNCs in Malaysia. Descriptive statistics and inferential multiple linear regressions were used to analyse the data. The researchers used Bandura's (1978) social cognitive career theory (SCCT) as their study's theoretical framework because the theory is a versatile theory that can be adapted to many contexts including human resources in R&D organizations. This theory features several variables that help to guide career development which include personal aspects (e.g. self-efficacy) and the environment (e.g. organizational supports, socialization and initiatives) within the process of career development. Ismail and Ramly (2011) found that cognitive-person factors (self-efficacy) and behaviour (continuous improvement practices) contributed more than environmental factors (organizational socialization) to the career aspirations. They also found that continuous improvement practices and self-efficacy influence employees' career aspirations. This is similar to Saleh's (2012) research findings where self-efficacy played an important role in career development.

Pinnington (2011) studied the competence development and career advancement in professional service firms. The study aimed to analyse how lawyers' competencies can be developed and how their careers may be advanced. The study considered the competences and careers of a group of junior professional knowledge workers employed full-time in a large law firm and conceptualises their competence development and professional career advancement using a qualitative interpretive research methodology. Pinnington (2011) found that self-understanding of lawyers is shaped by background, education and stage of career. This self-understanding leads to protean or high self-direction. She argued that career moves made by lawyers following success or failure at any stage are once again a prompted individual response to standard institutional career dynamics of the professional labour market and the careers of lawyers studied in this firm remain remarkably similar to Super's (1957) traditional career redux theory which describes career as linear, upward progression with a focus on extrinsic rewards and organizational career management.

Arokiasamy, Ismail, Ahmad and Othman (2011) in their study examined individual and organizational factors in managing the career advancement of academics in fast developing private universities. A correlation study was conducted in six private universities. Data were collected using a structured self-administered questionnaire. The dependent variable was academics' career advancement and the independent variables were individual and organizational factors. Using stratified random sampling, 105 full-time academics were selected as the study respondents representing sampling criteria such as pure science and social science disciplines, job positions and academic qualifications. Through regression analysis, Arokiasamy, Ismail, Ahmad and Othman (2011) found that organizational variables, specifically mentoring, social network and organizational support, were the significant

contributors to the career advancement but they found that individual variables did not significantly contribute to career advancement. The researchers believed that one reason that might explain this difference is that the career examined in this study is very much associated with organization. This is very similar to the research findings of Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002) who argue that organizational variables are extremely important in determining career advancement of employees because the organization is the context in which the career is in action.

Lewis and Arnold (2012) studied on how organisational career management techniques are used within the UK retail buying and merchandising community. Using the quantitative research methods via an online survey of buying and merchandising community managers across 30 UK-based retailers, the researches explored the extent of organisational career management technique usage, buyers and merchandisers' evaluations of such techniques and the barriers to using them. In their findings, the researchers found that internal job posting, performance appraisal for career development; induction and competencies were the most commonly used as career management techniques. They found that the most consistently favoured techniques were training and educational opportunities, career-planning workshops, PDPs, induction and fast-track programmes. In comparison to other studies, Lewis and Arnold (2012) found that their respondents perceived organisational career management techniques to be relatively unfair and identified the main barriers to their use as time and budget constraints, unsupportive management, poor technique development or implementation and poor employee attitude or understanding.

2.2 Research Framework

From the career development concepts, theories and previous models, the researcher has come up with the research framework to study the current scenario of career development in UMLand:

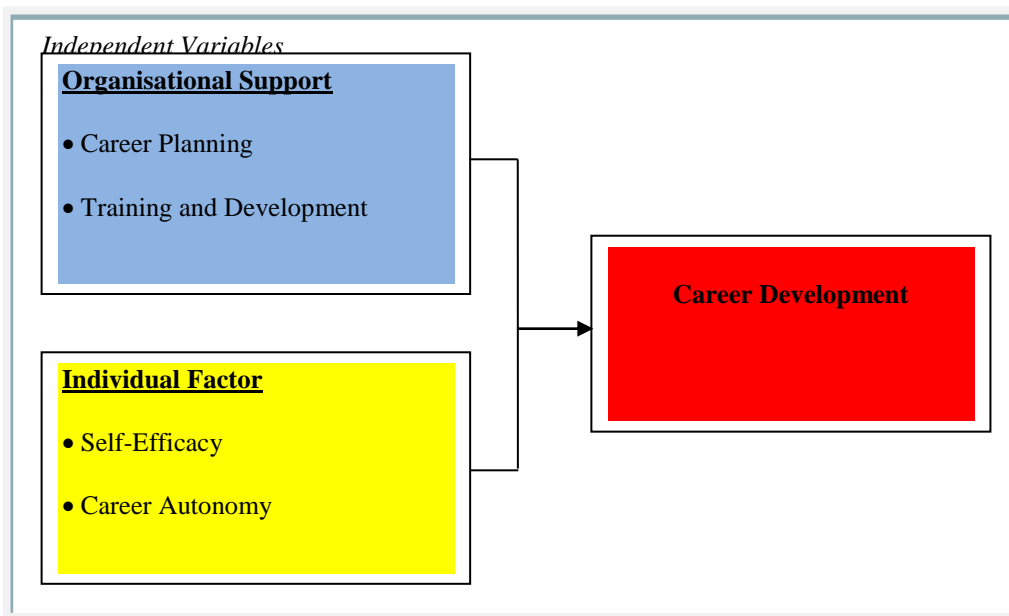


Figure 2.4: Research Framework
Source: Articulated by the researcher

3. Methodology

This research is designed for a case study on career development. The research design is guided by the research objectives of determining the relationship between organisational support and individual factor with career development. The research framework articulated by the researcher also act as the scope of the research. Respondents are identified based on the employees list provided by the management. To speed up data collection, questionnaire with 5-point Likert Scale is employed. Pilot test was conducted to check on face validity of the questionnaire. Data will be analysed using the SPSS 16.0 software and by using the inferential method (Spearman Correlation) to answer the objectives of this study.

Quantitative data are analysed using the descriptive and inference statistical methods by utilising Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) 16.0. For this research, Spearman Correlation is used to measure the relationship between variables. The Spearman rank-order correlation coefficient (Spearman’s correlation, for short), is a non-parametric measure of the strength and direction of association that exists between two variables measured on at least an ordinal scale. It is denoted by the symbol r_s (or the Greek letter ρ , pronounced rho). Like all correlation coefficients, Spearman’s rho measures the strength of association of two variables. As such, the Spearman Correlation Coefficient is a close sibling to Pearson’s Bivariate Correlation Coefficient, Point-Biserial Correlation, and the Canonical Correlation.

4. Results

4.1 Analysis on the relationship between career planning and career development

Based on the table 4.1, career planning shows a low correlation coefficient value which was 0.135. This means that there was low relationship between career planning and career development. The significance level or p -value is also more than 0.05 at 0.208 which means the correlation is not significant and the two variables are not linearly related. This indicates that employees perceive that career planning has no relationship with career development.

Table 4.1: Correlation between career planning and career development

Career Planning	Career Development
Correlation Coefficient	.135
Sig. (2-tailed)	.208
N	89

4.2 Analysis on the relationship between training and development and career development

For training and development factor, data shows a low correlation coefficient value of 0.171. Similar to the career planning factor, this indicates that there is no relationship between training and development with career development. The significance level or *p*-value is also more than 0.05 at 0.108 which means the correlation is not significant and the two variables are not linearly related.

Table 4.2: Correlation between training and development and career development

Training and Development	Career Development
Correlation Coefficient	.171
Sig. (2-tailed)	.108
N	89

4.3 Analysis on the relationship between self-efficacy and career development

On the other hand, self efficacy shows a high correlation coefficient value of 0.634. This indicates a relationship between self-efficacy and career development. The significance level or *p*-value is also less than 0.05 which means the correlation is significant and the two variables are linearly related. This reflects the respondent perception that there is a relationship between self-efficacy and career development.

Table 4.3: Correlation between self-efficacy and career development

Self-Efficacy	Career Development
Correlation Coefficient	.634
Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
N	89

4.4 Analysis on the relationship between career autonomy and career development

Similar to the self efficacy factor, career autonomy shows a high correlation coefficient value of 0.516. This indicates that there was a relationship between career autonomy and career development. The significance level or *p*-value is also less than 0.05 which means the correlation is significant and the two variables are linearly related.

Table 4.4: Correlation between career autonomy and career development

Career Autonomy	Career Development
Correlation Coefficient	.516
Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
N	89

5. Discussion and Conclusion

The Spearman Correlation analysis showed that career planning is not significantly related to career development. This result indicates that employees perceive that there is no relationship between career planning and career development. The implication is employees do not have a long term career plan for them and thus lead the organizations to focus on short-term vision and do not adopt strategic plans for further development. Due to the large supply of human capital in the market, employees are not on the top priority of the organizations' concerns. Consequently, as highlighted by Al Methahab (2007), few organizations are concerned about their staff's career planning and development and rarely do they allocate huge budget for organizational practices to support career development activities.

The Spearman correlation analysis also showed that training and development factor has low correlation with career development. Although employees participated in training courses organised by the company, the individual training and development plans and efficient relations to their career development is absent. This finding also contradicts with previous research and models on the importance of training and development for employees' career development. The implication is that employees are unable to receive a continuous knowledge and skill needed for their present jobs. This is, as described by Mondy and Noe (2005), includes formal training which is a planned, structured, and occurs when people are called away from their workstations to participate in this exercise and development which involves learning that goes beyond today's job and has a more long-term focus, it prepares employees to keep pace with the organization as it changes and grows.

Self-efficacy is found to be positively related to career development. This shows that the employees believe that they are capable of improving and developing their career-relevant skills as they have self-confident in dealing with multiple domains in life. This is in line with the notable Super's (1963) research on "Life-Span" or "Life-Space Theory" which marked as one of the greatest contributions to career development. An individual with a sense of self-efficacy would know their capability to achieve their career goals. It is a physiological state that a person's hold which directs them to perform his work at the best of their capacity. Similarly, Saleh's (2012) research also found that employees have high self-efficacy, which stresses that the individuals can contribute to the success of their career development by their increased ability in acquiring new skills and achieving higher personal goals if they would have the organizational platform and support in enhancing their career development.

Similarly, career autonomy is also positively correlated with career development. Employees perceive that there is a relationship between career and career development. This is in line with Hall's (2002) Protean Career Model which emphasized on self-directed approach to learning and the idea that it is the manager who drives the career. This has similar findings from a comparative study by Cadin, Bender, De Saint Giniez, and Pringle (2001) that showed a mix of career development processes happening with more traditional organizational career patterns in France; more self-directed and mobile careers in New

Zealand. In other words, individuals now combine their personal career aspiration with organisational facilities like trainings and mentoring for career development. This is also in line with research findings by Bambacas (2010) which stated that the more opportunities provided for managing their own career resulted in them feeling less “obliged” to stay. It is likely that career self-management may have positive effects on individuals’ normative commitment when they value continuous learning and are given opportunities to manage their own careers.

5.2 Research Potentials for Future Works

Career development is a novel and rapidly developing area of research. Though the first conceptual study in this area was published in 2002, much research has already been done in order to facilitate our understanding of the concept of career development. Some other potentials for future research which are related to this research includes analysis of demography and career development pattern behaviour on the career development to be considered for better managerial decision. Also, this study was conducted to find the relationship between individual factors and organisational support with career development from the employee’s view point. Another approach is to explore and include the organization’s viewpoints. In other words, it should assess the company and other organizations’ viewpoints and their stance regarding what they might identify as influencing factors that has relationship with career development.

6. Acknowledgements

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