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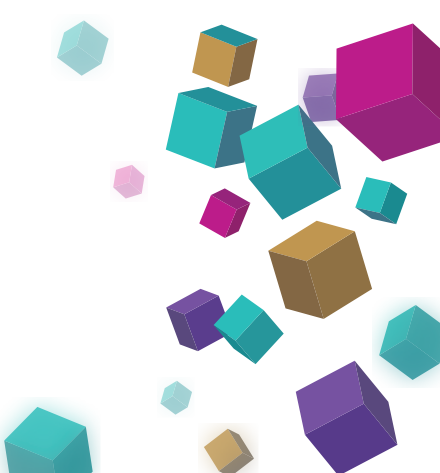
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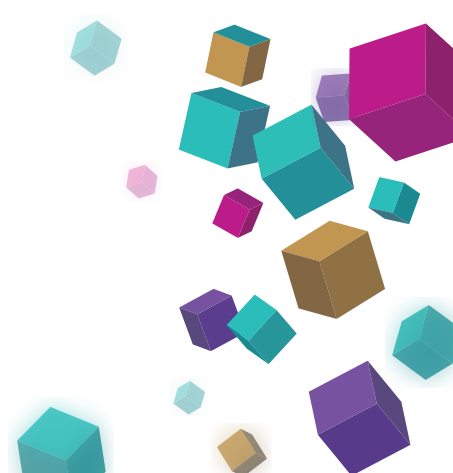
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Perceived Organizational Support (POS) and the Career Success among Academician in Malaysian Universities

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to investigate the influence of perceived organizational support (POS) on subjective and objective career success, aiming at career success among Malaysia academician. The sample of this study consisted of 100 lecturers from one of the higher learning institution in Malaysia. The findings indicated that partial relationships exists between perceived organizational support with the career success. Perceived organizational support was significantly and positively related to the subjective career success (career satisfaction) but not the objective career success (number of promotion).

Keywords: *Career Success; Perceived Organizational Support; Objective; Subjective*

1. Introduction

Career success is a topic that is very important to both individuals, organizations and researchers (Maurer & Chapman, 2013). Career success can be viewed as a way for individuals to fulfill their need for achievement and power (Lau & Shaffer, 1999). Judge, Higgins, Thoresen and Barrick (1999) view that employees' personnel success can eventually contribute to organizational success (as cited in Ng, Eby, Sorensen & Feldman, 2005). Orpen (1994) has studied the effects of organizational and individual career management on career success. According to the author, the term organizational career management is employed to cover the various policies and practices, deliberately established by organizations to improve the career

effectiveness of their employees. On the other hand, individual career management is the personal efforts made by individuals to advance their own career goals which may coincide with those their organizational have for them. The results indicated that employees are more successful in their career when they systematically plan their careers and their employers provide the necessary “infrastructure” which support the development efforts of their employees. Nabi (2003) found that job security and career progress were positively related to career success. Career progress is viewed as critical to subjective career success because they provide an individual with a favorable evaluation of their success in terms of future outlook and past performance.

Various researches have been conducted to examine the predictors of career success. According to Aryee, Chay and Tan (1994) the three well-known approaches are the individual, the structural and the behavioral perspective. However, the study by Poon (2004) showed that career commitment predicted objective career success in the form of salary level and subjective career success in the form of career satisfaction. Ellis and Henerman (1990) viewed that at the organization levels, knowledge of the career success helps manager design and implement effective career systems that recognize individual need (as cited in Akrivos et al., 2007). Ali, Shaharudin and Anuar (2012) discovered that there is no influence between the human capital (work experience and job position) on the subjective career success (career satisfaction).

It is obvious in most organizations, there are very vast differences in the career achievements, some people are more successful in their career than others. Why does this happen? What influences the upward career mobility of people? This study attempts to explore the above situation by investigating the phenomena where some individuals move up their career at a faster rate and to a higher level compared to their peers of similar capacity. Previous study has mentioned that perceived organizational support (POS) as one of the factor that contribute towards a person’s advancement in career. The question is whether POS relates to the career success among academia in Malaysian universities? To understand the phenomena, this paper has proposed a framework to study the impact of POS on subjective and objective career success, aiming at career success among Malaysia academician. By clearly understand the variables that contribute towards career success, head of department as well as managers in the universities are in the best position to structure employee development programmes to cater for the relevant determinants in their future plan.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Career Success

Most people want to feel successful at their work (Greenhaus, 1971). Thus,

for almost a century, career scholars have been concerned with the antecedents of career success (e.g., Boudreau, Boswell, & Judge, 2001; Parsons, 1909). From the resulting literature, it seems apparent that an impressive body of knowledge has been accumulated about the sources of a “successful” career. This presumes, however, that the criterion, career success, has been adequately conceptualized and measured.

Ballout (2008) cited that in the career literature, career success is composed of two components: (1) an objective career success component that consists of observable career accomplishments attained during the course of one’s life career, and (2) a subjective career component that consists of affective career aspirations involving pride and satisfaction of individuals throughout careers. Objective indicators of career success include such factors as total compensation, number of promotion, others tangible trappings of accomplishment, whereas the subjective career success is viewed as a function of the individual’s perception of satisfaction with the job and with career progress. In the Malaysian perspective, Poon et al. (2015) identified three categories of objective career success; achievement (material based), ability to support and formal learning and five categories of subjective career success; making a difference, satisfaction, work-life balance, goal fulfillment and informal learning. Few studies have been conducted on career success among academician in Malaysia (Ismail, Mohd Rasdi & Abdul Wahat, 2005; Ismail, Ahmad & Othman, 2011).

2.2 Perceived Organizational Support

Organizational support theory developed by Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, & Sowa (1986) may help explain employees’ emotional commitment to their organization. This approach assumes that in order to meet socioemotional needs and to assess the organization’s readiness to reward increased efforts, employees form general beliefs concerning how much the organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being (perceived organizational support [POS]). POS may be encouraged by employees’ tendency to ascribe humanlike characteristics to the organization (Eisenberger et al., 1986). Levinson (1965) noted that actions by agents of the organization are often viewed as indications of the organization’s intent rather than solely as actions of a particular individual. This personification of the organization, suggested Levinson, is abetted by the organization’s legal, moral, and financial responsibility for the actions of its agents; by organizational culture that provides continuity and prescribes role behaviors; and by the power the organization’s agents exert over individual employees. Because employees personify the organization, they would view favorable or unfavorable treatment as indicative of the organization’s benevolent or malevolent orientation toward them.

On the basis of the reciprocity norm, POS would create a felt obligation to

care about the organization's welfare and help the organization reach its objectives. The fulfillment of socioemotional needs by POS is suggested by findings that the association between POS and performance was greater among employees having high socioemotional needs (Armeli, Eisenberger, Fasolo, & Lynch, 1998).

Hutchison (1997) reported reliable relationships between supervisor support and POS and between POS and career commitment. The commitment was found to be associated with additional measures of supportive and caring treatment by employees' supervisors, including leader consideration (Bycio, Hackett, & Allen, 1995; DeCotiis & Summers, 1987; Mottaz, 1988), and high-quality leader-member exchanges (Settoon et al., 1996; Wayne et al., 1997).

Beneficial treatment received from a supervisor should increase POS to the extent that such treatment is attributed to the organization's policies, procedures, or general culture (Levinson, 1965) rather than to the supervisor's idiosyncratic motivation. Given the positive effect of POS on employee commitment, it seems logical to suggest that perceived organizational support is related to career success as well (Ballout, 2007). Study conducted by Barnett and Bradley (2007) also showed the positive relationship between organizational support for career development and career satisfaction. Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002) in their meta-analysis found that opportunities for greater recognition, pay and promotion are positively associated with POS.

3.0 Theoretical Framework

Research on career success clearly points towards two distinctive dimensions of career success which is on objective careers success and subjective career success. Based on the literature review, it is concluded that POS will have positive relationship with the career success. Figure 1 shows the research framework of this study.

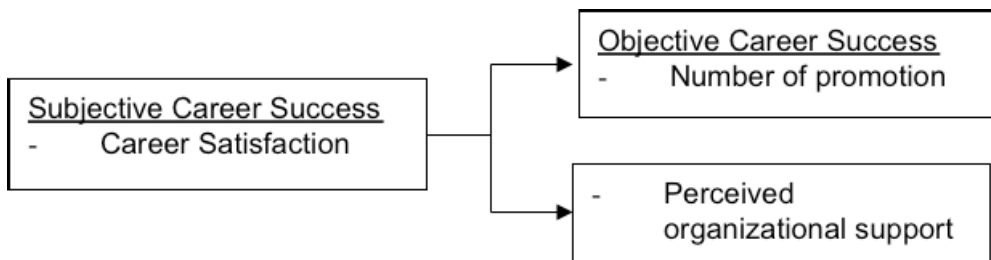


Figure 1. Research Framework of the Study

Based on the above framework, below hypotheses were derived :-

Hypothesis 1: Perceived organizational support will be positively related with number of promotion (objective career success)

Hypothesis 2: Perceived organizational support will be positively related with career satisfaction (subjective career success)

4. Research Methods

4.1 Research Design

This study is explanatory in nature. The study employs two methods; literature review and a survey to investigate the effects of perceived organizational support on the career success. This study also used hypotheses testing to determine the relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable. Data was collected using questionnaire distributed to respondents.

4.2 Population/Sample

A random sampling of the nonprobability design was used to distribute questionnaire. The unit of analysis was focused on individual lecturer. As such, the targeted population of this study would be academic staff of one particular interest of higher learning. Samples were given questionnaires by hand. In this study, only samples with full time job status were considered in order to gain more meaningful insights about the research topic. Using the purposive sampling, about 400 lecturers were targeted to be the sample for this research. The rule of thumb for determining sample size could be larger than 30 and less than 500 are appropriate for most research (Sekaran, 2006).

4.3 Statistical Analysis

Data was analyzed using SPSS. The reliability test, One-Way Anova analysis and multiple regressions were used to derive the results of the study.

5. Data Analysis and Findings

5.1 Response Rate

A total of 100 questionnaires were collected out of the 400 questionnaires distributed. The response rate was 26.5%. 6 of the questionnaires collected were rejected due to the invalid status of respondents; 4 contract and 2 part-time lecturers. Only 100 questionnaires were used in the analysis.

5.2 Respondents' Profile

The percentage of female respondents (64%) was higher than male respondents (36%). In terms of race, the majority of respondents were Malay (94.0%), followed by the Chinese (4.0%), and Indians (1.0%). About 82 percent of the respondents were

married. A majority of respondents hold a Master's Degree (96%), while only 2 % with Doctoral degree/PhD. In terms of academic rank, 74% were lecturer, 20% senior lecturer, and 6% were associate professor. The respondents age range from 26 years old to 59 years old.

5.3 Reliability Analysis

Reliability, using Cronbach's Apha was conducted to test the consistency or stability of items. Reliability of less than .6 are generally considered as poor, those in a range of .7 are acceptable and those over .8 are good (Sekaran, 2002). The results for reliability analysis showed that the Cronbach alpha for perceived organizational support is .82 and satisfaction is .89. No results obtained for objective career success measure of the number of promotion. Hence, with these score, all variables are considered as good reliability.

6. Statistical Results

6.1 Perceived Organizational Support and Number of Promotion

A One-Way Analysis of Variance is a way to test the equality of three or more means at one time by using variances. In one-way ANOVA, there is only one treatment factor variable. It assumes all the samples are drawn from normally distributed populations with equal variance. In this case, one hypothesis has been affected to test the association between the independent variables of with the dependent variable. Table 1, Table 2 and Table 3 showed the summary result of the One-Way Anova analysis for the relationship between organizational support and the number of promotion.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
0	47	6.8511	.31820	.04641
1	23	6.6957	.46268	.09648
2	21	6.3429	1.49284	.32576
3	7	6.6000	.50332	.19024
4	2	7.0000	.00000	.00000
Total	100	6.6940	.77496	.07750

The descriptive statistics in the Table 1 described the organizational support level with the number of promotions among academic staff. The result can be translated as four times (n=2) promotion have the highest level of the perceived organizational support (7.00) as compared with the lowest mean level of 2 times (n=21) promotion (6.34).

Table 2. Test of Homogeneity of Variances

Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
6.311	4	95	.201

As shown in Table 2, the significance result for homogeneity of variance is 0.205 (insignificant with $p > 0.05$), which shows that the error variance of the dependent variable is equal across the groups, hence, the assumption of the ANOVA test has been met.

Table 3. ANOVA

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	3.998	4	.999	1.712	.154
Within Groups	55.458	95	.584		
Total	59.456	99			

From the ANOVA result in Table 3, the significance value comparing the groups (number of promotion) is 0.154 (insignificant difference with $p > 0.05$), hence, the null hypothesis can be accepted. (Hypothesis 1: Perceived organizational support will be positively related with number of promotion (objective career success) – Rejected for H1).

6.2 Perceived Organizational Support and Career Satisfaction

Multiple regressions are important for this research as the result of regression is an equation that represents the best prediction of dependent variable from several independent variables. Hence, multiple regression analysis was applied to identify the influence of perceived organizational support on the career satisfaction

Table 4. R-Square and Durbin-Watson Test Results

Test	Result
R-Square	.223
Durbin Watson	1.880

Table 5. ANOVA Test Results

Test	F	Significant
ANOVA	6.815	.000

Table 6. Result of Coefficients

Variable	Standardized Coefficients			Collinearity Statistics	
	Beta	t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
Perceived Organizational Support	.188	3.960	.000	.929	1.077

DV – Career Satisfaction

Table 4 showed the R-Square and Durbin-Watson test. R-Square test result of 0.223 can be accepted for the regression analysis. The Durbin-Watson test result of 1.880, an indicator that the autocorrelation is almost reaching to zero or there is a significant difference between the dependent and independent variables (no autocorrelation). From the ANOVA in Table 5, it appears that the perceived organizational support with significance level of 0.000. The VIF value of less than 10 indicated that the problem of multi-collinearity had not existed and all the data are mutually exclusive. By examining the t statistic in Table 6, it apparently shows that perceived organizational support significant relationship with strong significant level ($p < 0.05$) on the career satisfaction, indicating the null hypothesis of H2 is appropriate and can be accepted (Accepted for H2).

Conclusion

In general, the results have shown that partial relationships that exist between perceived organizational support with the career success, on which perceived organizational support has a significant relationship with the subjective career success (career satisfaction) but not the objective career success (number of promotion). This

implies that academician received certain extent of support from the organizations that can increase their career satisfaction. On the contrary, academicians toward certain extent have not received appropriate organizational support for the number of promotion during their tenure in the university. This is happened particularly due to the frequent change of the career promotion policy and stringent requirements which have caused the difficulties for lecturers to secure promotion especially for the higher grades post. The track mode system according to the lecturer's expertise that has been introduced by the management of a public university can help to mitigate the difficulties and open more opportunities for academician to be promoted to higher grade post in the university.

Recommendations for Future Research

The purpose of the study was to examine the impact of perceived organizational support on objective and subjective career success among academic staff. The study was limited to only one higher institution and among the academicians. Future research should be conducted to determine if the results would be replicated with a more diverse sample. In addition, the findings of this research rhyme well with some of the earlier publications regarding career success. Thus, further research in this area should be valuable. As mentioned, it would be useful to complement this research with studies from other perspectives than just confine to the academic staff.

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