



Faculty of Cognitive Sciences and Human Development

**THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PROACTIVE PERSONALITY AND
CAREER SUCCESS IN HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY**

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Bachelor of Science with Honours
(Human Resource Development)
2020

UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA SARAWAK

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Final Year Project Report

Masters

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**THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PROACTIVE PERSONALITY AND CAREER
SUCCESS IN HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY**

CHERYL DHEWINA WONG

This project is submitted
in partial fulfilment of the requirements for a
Bachelor of Science with Honours
(Human Resource Development)

Faculty of Cognitive Sciences and Human Development
UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA SARAWAK
(2020)

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my appreciation and gratitude to those who supported and helped me in completing the final year project, directly and indirectly. First and foremost, I would like to thank God the Almighty for His blessing bringing this work to completion. I thank Him for giving knowledge, strength in mind, and courage for me to complete this study.

Next, I also would like to express my appreciation to my supervisor, Dr. Agatha Lamentan Muda for her time, efforts, and valuable guidance. Her supervision and encouragement are useful and helpful for this thesis writing. Her guidance always encourages me to learn and the process of learning is the best way that leads me to success. I thank you for your supervision for helping me to complete this study.

Furthermore, I also would like to appreciate my parents for all the unconditional love and support to face all the challenges in degree life especially in completing this study. I appreciate the prayers and wishes you gave for supporting and encouraging me in the completion of this study. I am very thankful to have my parents who are very supportive.

In addition, I would thanks the respondents who are willing to give full commitment and co-operation to me in answering the questionnaires of this research even they are busy with their own works and life. With their co-operation, my research is successfully completed.

Finally, I would like to thank my dearest classmates and friends who were willing to share their knowledge, provide support and useful opinions for me. I am thankful that I have met you all in my university life.

ABSTRACT

This study is aimed at finding the relationship between the proactive personality and career success (objective career success and subjective career success) in hospitality industry. This research was done by using quantitative method where the data were collected by using questionnaires as the instrument. The data was collected from 45 samples from hospitality industry in Kuching, Sarawak. The data were then analysed by using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Besides, Pearson Correlation test procedure was used to measure the relationships between the independent variables and dependent variables. The findings have shown that there is a significant relationship between the proactive personality and career success. As such, the researcher has recommended a focus on the study that may guide the organizations and future researches.

Keywords: Proactive Personality, Objective Career Success, Subjective Career Success, Hospitality Industry

ABSTRAK

Kajian ini bertujuan untuk menentukan hubungan antara personaliti proaktif dan kejayaan kerjaya (kejayaan kerjaya objektif dan kejayaan kerjaya subjektif) dalam industri hospitaliti. Penyelidikan ini dilakukan dengan menggunakan kaedah kuantitatif. Borang soal selidik digunakan sebagai instrumen untuk mengumpulkan data. Data dikumpulkan daripada 45 sampel daripada industri hospitaliti di Kuching, Sarawak. Data dianalisis kemudian dengan menggunakan statistik deskriptif dan inferensi. Selain itu, ujian Pearson Correlation digunakan untuk memastikan hubungan antara pemboleh ubah bebas dan pemboleh ubah bersandar. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahawa terdapat hubungan yang signifikan antara personaliti proaktif dan kejayaan kerjaya. Oleh itu, penyelidik telah mengesyorkan fokus pada kajian yang dapat membantu organisasi dan penyelidikan masa depan.

Kata kunci: Personaliti Proaktif, Kejayaan Kerjaya Objektif, Kejayaan Kerjaya Subjektif, Industri Hospitaliti

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of Study

Career has been increasingly emphasised by people nowadays as it can represent one's achievement in life. The definition is progress of an individual in occupation throughout the lifetime with opportunities for moving forward. Career is meaningful for life, a good career offers stability such as financial security, direction to our life and attains status in society. Thus, career success is important as it can let the employees feel that they can contribute much to the society and being someone who is valuable in life. According to Pachulicz, Schmitt, and Kuljanin (2008), career success frequently contributes to organizational career success and people's well-being. Career success is also another essential output variable for researches related to career.

Both objective and subjective criteria can be explored for career success study stated by Seibert, Crant and Kraimer (1999). Criteria of objective career success those identified by Abele and Spurk (2009) are salary, growing of income, advancement, or status of hierarchical. Subjective career success is preference of the individual for his or her development in job (Gattiker & Larwood, 1986). The study about career success are increasing recently because the organisation now become more aware to the career success of their employees. Tokar, Fischer and Subich (1998) stated that vocational psychology has been extensively studied on how personality affects the people to choose their career and their performances in it.

Personality is the characteristics of an individual that makes him or her different with each other. Roberts (2006) stated that it describes distinctive ways to respond to the surrounding and includes provisions for thinking, feeling and behaving in a different way. Therefore, personality can affect one's decision or behaviour in doing their job. Proactive is

making changes to a situation instead of just accepting it after it has happened. Proactive personality is the focused personality in this research. Proactive personality is not constrained by situation and can make changes to the environment (Bateman & Crant, 1993). Proactive person not only achieve more in their career but also has better adaption to their surroundings (Brown, Cober, Kane, Levy, & Shalhoop, 2006). This means individual with proactive personality is willing to keep learning and finding the opportunities to enhance themselves, they would always review themselves in context of their knowledge, skills and ability in order to doing best in their job and then can achieve career success.

Hospitality industry is one of the industries that makes great contribution to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of Malaysia. Hospitality industry can be divided into three main categories which are accommodation, food and drinks, and travel and tourism. Over the past 12 years, Malaysia's tourism industry has achieved an average annual growth rate of 11.2%, far higher than other economic sectors. As addition, the amount of tourist arrival to Malaysia in 2019 is 26.1 millions. This industry is depending on the availability of disposable income and time for leisure of customers. This industry also aims to satisfy their customers by creating good services and products. According to Kusluvan and Kusluvan (2000), it is vital to have a worker who is committed, enthusiastic and skilled for success of firms in industry. Hence, it is relevant to determine the variables those contribute to career success in the hospitality industry.

For current research, researcher choose to focus on the relationship between proactive personality and career success in hospitality industry. Proactive personality as the antecedents of career success are being studied in this research.

1.2 Problem Statement

Crossing the past 25 years, literature of career comprehended "new" models for career focused on the proactivity of individuals, and has recognized that career success has expanded into a wider concept than income and position (Bagdadli & Gianecchini, 2019). Besides, the literature on impacts of career success on individual behaviours and workplace outcomes has been studied more compared to its antecedents, however study of the antecedents of career success is necessary because more effective career system, and strategy can be designed to help organizations and individual employees that would increase career success of organizational members (Amin, Arshad & Ghani, 2017). Thus, career success is chosen by researcher as the dependent variable in this quantitative study. Study by Spurk, Keller and Hirschi (2019) stated that past research revealed that how personality traits relate to career success anyhow the researches just targeted on one criteria from the career success either objective or subjective criteria. In this study, researcher aims use both criteria of career success as dependent variables.

Previous studies has been studied on various variables such as personality, gender, education, career tactics, and mentoring relationships are related to career success (Heslin, 2005). Capabilities of individuals by being efficacious to impact the surroundings and adjust the behaviour is sometimes vital to career success because present working situation is fast and complex in switching the structure as stated by Converse, Pathak, DePaul-Haddock, Gotlib, and Merbedone (2012). This propose models for career success can include personality variables. Mostly available trait framework used in personality psychology is Big Five model (Judge & Zapata, 2015). However, according to Li, Wang, Gao and You (2017), Big Five model has been claimed by several researchers probably is not suited in work domain studies and additional personality constructs should be explored. Bateman and Crant (1993) introduced another measure of personality which is proactive personality. This

measure identify the differences in people in taking initiative to influence their environments. It is found by researchers that the motivation to learn, organizational citizenship behaviours, task performance and overall job performance which are predicted by using proactive personality is more reliable than Big Five as stated by Spitzmuller, Sin, Howe, and Fatimah (2015). Haenggli and Hirschi (2020) stated that the people are facing nonstop transforming working environment resulting from job restructuring, technological advances and globalization that have directly affected their careers, and have greater accountability for development of own career. Thus, researcher choose proactive personality instead of Big Five model as independent variable to relate to career success.

International hospitality and tourism are capable of making compelling contribution to the economic because it is fast-growing and labour-intensive industry (Le, McDonald & Klieve, 2018). However, the hospitality industry has high labour turnover rates, vacancies are not easy to be filled and difficulty in attracting suitable employees (Ladkin & Buhalis, 2016). According to Department of Statistics Malaysia, the turnover rate increases from 2013 to 2017 by 3.3% especially service sector which contributed 62.7%. Segovia-Perez , Figueroa-Domecq, Fuentes-Moraleda, and Munoz-Mazon (2019) found that low salaries, elongated labour hours and poor job security are associated with the employment in the hospitality industry. Employees have greater intention to exit the industry because of the narrow career opportunities (Brown, Thomas & Bosselman, 2015). Besides, Poon, Briscoe, Abdul-Ghani, and Jones (2015) stated past studies on career success in Malaysia have been mostly on women and academics. This prove that study of career success on hospitality industry in Malaysia is still lacking. Hence, researcher intended to discover the relationship between proactive personality and career success in hospitality industry.

1.3 Objectives of Study

General objective:

To determine the relationship between proactive personality and career success in hospitality industry.

Specific objectives:

1. To identify the relationship between proactive personality and objective career success in hospitality industry.
2. To identify the relationship between proactive personality and subjective career success in hospitality industry.

1.4 Research Hypotheses

Ha1: There is a significant relationship between proactive personality and objective career success.

Ha2: There is a significant relationship between proactive personality and subjective career success.

1.5 Conceptual Framework

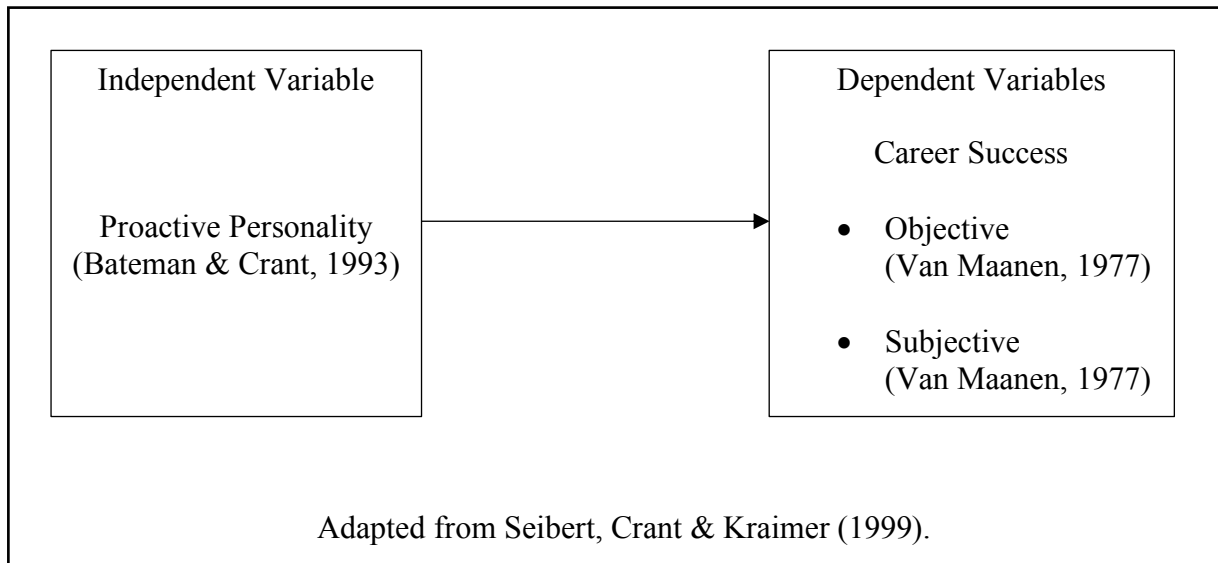


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

Figure 1 is the conceptual framework for current study. Current study aims to study the relationship between proactive personality and career success in hospitality industry. The figure also shows the independent and dependent variables for present study. The independent variable is proactive personality from Bateman and Crant (1993) while dependent variables are objective career success and subjective career success by Van Maanen (1977). The conceptual framework is adapted from Seibert, Crant and Kraimer (1999). They examined the relationship between proactive personality and career success on 496 employees from different occupations and organizations. The data collection was done through survey. Proactive personality was found positively associated with objective and subjective career success. Proactive person are believed to involve more in managing career activities such as getting career support and sponsorship, look up for job and organizational information, planning career and persisting in facing career obstacles (Ma, 2003). Thus, the outcomes of individuals' objective and subjective career success are linked to their proactivity.

1.6 Significance of Study

1.6.1 Significance to Body of Knowledge

Current study provides the knowledge of the antecedent of career success and the contribution of proactive personality towards career success. Besides, contribution of the information of the relationship between certain personality trait which is proactive personality with objective and subjective career success. This provides references for other researcher to understand more on proactive personality as antecedent for career success. Future research could be expanded from the start of the workers get into the organization until they left or gender as the mediator of this research which including contribution to the growth of literature of importance of proactivity in the working environment.

1.6.2 Significance to Human Resource Practitioner

Current study provide data for the relationship of proactive personality with career success which consisting of career and life satisfaction. Practitioner can have knowledge of proactivity and career success. This findings be able to provide the importance to hire employees with proactive personality and so forth the employees can work well in the organization. Proactive person will overcome difficulties that preventing them from being satisfied so that they will be have more satisfaction with their jobs (Erdogan & Bauer, 2005). Aspects correlated with career success should be understand as is important for understanding the relationships between individual traits and behaviours, organizational practices (career planning and development), and societal and labour market processes that reflect the demands of labour market.

1.6.3 Significance to Related Industry

This study contribute information about personality that should be possessed in workers in hospitality industry for achieving career success. Workforce for related industry can realise influence of proactive personality towards career success. Thus, knowing proactive personality can bring career success, hospitality workers would tend to practice the proactive behaviour to become more excellent workforce for this industry. Competent workforce is important as contribution of hospitality industry to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is significant. As the industry is growing, the salary and job security in related industry can be increased. Therefore, turnover rate in hospitality can be reduced.

1.7 Definition of Terms

In this section are the definitions for the important terms for current study in context of conceptual definition followed by operational definition.

1.7.1 Proactive Personality

Proactive Personality is defined as individuals can change their current situation and social surroundings intentionally and directly (Buss, 1987; Diener, Larsen & Emmons, 1984). It is proactive behaviours practiced by the employees, this variable is measured by Proactive Personality Test adapted from Bateman and Crant (1993).

1.7.2 Objective Career Success

Objectives career success as compensation (Judge & Bretz, 1994), advancement (Greenhaus, Parasuraman, & Wormley, 1990) and hierarchical status (responsibility, authority, independent) (Abele and Spurk, 2009). The satisfaction on compensation,

advancement, responsibility, authority and independent, this variable is measured using questions adapted from Weiss, Dawis and England (1967).

1.7.3 Subjective Career Success

The individual's inclination for enhancement in an employment, which is his or her own judgement of career experience (Gattiker & Larwood, 1986). Achievement on organizational success which are job success, interpersonal success, financial success and hierarchical success. Adaption of questions from Gattiker and Larwood (1986) to measure this variable.

1.8 Summary

This chapter has discussed the current research main idea on the relationship between proactive personality and career success. This chapter also discussed on the important information needed to conduct the research such as the objectives, research questions, hypotheses, significance and definition for important terms for present research. Next chapter delves with review of literature.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Researcher reviews past research that support the purpose of this study and discussion on independent variable and dependent variables. The relationship of proactive personality and career success should be understood more to facilitate the human resource practitioner in organization.

2.2 Issues of Research

2.2.1 Proactive Personality

Bateman and Crant (1993) introduced proactive personality and its measurement when they discussed the proactive component for organizational behaviour. According to them, proactive personality relates to the differences in individual in the inclination for taking initiative to influence their environments. The introduced measurement can identify differences among people how they influence their environments. People with proactive personalities show initiative, take action, and persist until worthwhile change is happened. Adjacently, non-proactive people show the opposite patterns which are failure to identify problem, give up themselves and lose the opportunities to make changes.

Other than that, proactive personality has been emphasized by empirical studies on its importance to increase job satisfaction as stated by Li, Wang, Gao and You (2017). They study on the proactive personality in predicting the job satisfaction of teachers with work engagement and self-efficacy as mediator. Findings showed proactive personality is positively associated with teachers' satisfaction and the mediators partially mediate the relation. The study proved proactive people are tend to seize every chances to exceed normal performance goals.