DOES CAREER PROGRAM HAVE EFFECT ON EMPLOYEE OUTCOMES? EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE

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Abstract:
This study sets to examine the relationship between career program and employee outcomes. A survey method was employed to obtain data from employees of a military based university in Malaysia. The outcomes of SmartPLS path model analysis showed four important findings: first, career planning was positively and insignificantly correlated with job satisfaction. Second, career management was positively and significantly correlated with job satisfaction. Thirdly, career planning was positively and insignificantly correlated with career commitment. Finally, career management was positively and significantly correlated with career commitment. This result confirms that career planning does not act as an essential predictor of job satisfaction and career commitment, but career management does act as an essential predictor of job satisfaction and career commitment in the studied organization. In addition, this study provides discussion, implications and conclusion.

Keywords: Career planning, career management, job satisfaction, career commitment

1. Introduction

Career program is an important element in any organization and viewed as a crucial human capital management function (Ismail et al., 2013; Wilkens and Nermerich, 2011). It normally links to an employer designs and administers career programs to amalgamate employees' interests and capabilities with organizational opportunities, as well as adjust with current and future organizational changes. This effort will motivate employees to choose occupations or professions not only to obtain salaries, but also to earn a better progress in their career paths (Baruch, 2004; Greenhaus et al., 2000; Martin et al., 2001; Theodossiou and Zangelis, 2009). A review of current literature pertaining on human capital development shows that career program consists of two salient features: career planning and

career management (Conger,2002; Nachbagauer et al., 2002; Post et al., 2007). Career planning is defined as management plans on going career program activities for their employees using proper assessment tools (e.g., vocational counseling, workbooks and/or career resource centre) in order to identify career options and preferences, set up development objectives and establish action plans to help employees match their interests and capabilities with organizational opportunities (Appelbaum and Shapiro, 2002; Dessler, 2013; Greenhaus et al., 2000; Mondy et al., 2002; Puah and Ananthram, 2006). Conversely, career management is usually defined management continuously monitors career program activities in order to enable employees easily adapting with organizational changes (e.g., turbulent working environment, job stability and security, flexible work practice and multi skilling) and to achieve higher career ladders in organizations (Greenhaus et al., 2000; Martin et al., 2001; Whymark and Ellis, 1999).

Interestingly, extant studies in the organizational career program reveal that the ability of management to properly plan and manage career programs may have a significant impact on employee outcomes, especially job satisfaction (Wilkens and Nermerich, 2011; Ismail et al., 2013), and career commitment (Ferreira et al., 2007; Hirschi, 2009). In an organizational behavior perspective, job satisfaction is normally interpreted as a form of behavior towards work of conditions, employees' judgment and employees process of thoughts regarding with their jobs, facets or aspects (Linz, 2003; Weiner, 1982), individuals' positive emotional state, pleasurable feelings and/or attitudes towards job resulting from their appraisals about the extrinsic and intrinsic job characteristics (Appelbaum and Shapiro, 2002; Gregson, 1987; Linz, 2003; McShane and Von Glinow, 2005). Career commitment is often interpreted as an individual's attitude towards their chosen profession or vocation (Blau, 1985), one's motivation to work in a chosen vocation (Carson, and Bedeian, 1994), and if an employee is committed and attached to his job and organization, and he likes what he does in that position, he is more likely to show a high level of career commitment (Andre, and Ted Shir, 2011).

In a career program model, most researchers think that career planning, career management, job satisfaction and career commitment are distinct, but strongly interconnected constructs. For example, the ability of management to appropriately plan and manage the progression of employee career paths may lead to enhanced positive employee outcomes, especially job satisfaction and career commitment in organizations. Although the nature of the relationship between career program and employee outcomes is interesting, the role of career program as an important predicting variable has been given less emphasized in the workplace career research literature (Hirschi, 2009; Ismail et.al., 2013). Many scholars argue that this condition is due to the previous studies have much explained the features of career program, employed a simple association method to describe respondent attitudes toward general career program features, and determines the degree of association between career program and particular employee outcomes, as well as neglected to measure the effect size and nature of the correlation between career program and employee outcomes in the workplace. As a result, these studies have provided inadequate findings and not much help practitioners to clearly understand the complexity of career program, and formulate strategic career programs to upgrade organizational competitiveness in an era of knowledge based economy (Hirschi, 2009; Ismail et.al., 2013; Wilkens and Nermerich, 2011). Therefore, this situation encourages the researchers to further explore the nature of this relationship.

This study has four objectives: first, is to examine the relationship between career planning and job satisfaction. Second, is to examine the relationship between career management and job

satisfaction. Third, is to examine the relationship between career planning and career commitment. Fourth, is to examine the relationship between career management and career commitment.

2. Literature Review

Several extant studies using an indirect effects model to measure organizational career program based on different samples, such as perceptions of 445 respondents in Portugal (Ferreira et al., 2007), perceptions of 330 Swiss eighth graders in Switzerland (Hirschi, 2009), 5500 household taken from British Household Panel Survey (Theodossiou and Zangelisa, 2009), 620 students from Portuguese school system (Janeiro, 2010), 13 in-depth interviews with workers from knowledge intensive working context (Wilkens and Nermerich, 2011), and 140 employees in a Sabah local government in Borneo (Ismail et al., 2013). The results of these studies reported two important findings: first, the ability of management to properly plan (e.g., set up goals and policies) and manage (e.g., monitoring the progression of employees in career paths) career programs had motivated employees to enhance their job satisfaction (Theodossiou and Zangelisa, 2009; Wilkens and Nermerich, 2011; Ismail et.al.. 2013), and career commitment (Ferreira et al., 2007; Hirschi, 2009).

Employees who received training for diversity are more dedicated towards their organizations, and more satisfied with their careers. Diversity training also has positive effect on invention and creativity (Sohail, Kashif ur Rehman, Shams ul Haq, Iqbal, Adeel Razaq, and M. Suleman Sabir (2011). Budhwani,and Cheema (2013) emphasized that the highest competitive benefit of an enterprise lies in its ability to have and retain the skilled, competent and knowledgeable employee with them and career management and development has conventionally been an operative tool of employee development and retention and maintenance. Policy makers in organizations must understand and appreciate the need for career management and development of their employees if they want to prepare them for the leadership challenges of the future.

According to the theory of work adjustment by Rene V. Dawis and Lloyd H. Lofquist, the relationship between individual (e.g., skills and abilities) and work environment (e.g., rewards, recognition, security and monitoring) plays essential role in developing correspondence. Correspondence can be achieved if there is communal process between worker's satisfaction and employer satisfactoriness (Eggerth, 2008). A worker's satisfaction is based on rewards and reinforcers from the environment (e.g., compensation, company policies, independence) that meet a worker's psychological needs, and worker's satisfactoriness relies on the employer's perception that employee demonstrates successful work behavior which acceptable to the organizational culture, and the demands of the job (Renfro-Michel, Burlew, and Robert, 2009). The increase of correspondence will make tenure to be increased, while as correspondence decreases, the probability to remain and commit on the job and the projected length of tenure will decrease. In this case, tenure is an indicator of job satisfaction and function of correspondence between individual and the work environment (Dawis and Lofquist, 1984). Oliveira, Cavazotte, and Dunzer (2013) suggested that leadership career management support (LCMS), positively affects job satisfaction, beyond the effects promoted by career success, and job satisfaction has an effect on both affective commitment and turnover intention. Work adjustment also has positive association with role clarity and negatively associated with role conflict (Kittler, Rygl, Mackinnon, and Wiedemann, 2011), and this leads to job satisfaction.

Nimalathasan and Brabete (2010) stated high level of employees' performance is related to high level of fair promotion, reasonable wage system, appropriate work and good working condition. In other words, employee's job

satisfaction has positive impact on their performance. While Darvish, Zare, and Nekoie (2011) suggested in their finding that the main elements like the nature of the job, emotional commitment, work environment, job security, coworkers, education, job type, salary and the premium and job independence have their influences on burnout. These factors are considered as vital to be maintained and monitored by the management to ensure the increase of employee's job satisfaction and career commitment.

The empirical studies support the notion of motivation theory. For example, Herzberg's (1959, 1966) motivator-hygiene theory posits that work characteristics as important factors that enhance individual motivations. While, Alderfer's (2002) Existence, Relatedness and Growth theory explains that job needs as essential factors that enhance individual motivations. Further, McClelland's (1962) learned needs theory highlights that need for achievement, need for affiliation and need for power as important predictors of individual motivations. Application of these theories in a career program model reveals that individuals' work characteristics (Herzberg, 1959,1966), individuals' job needs (Alderfer, 2002), and individuals' learned needs (McClelland,1962) will enhance if management able to appropriately plan and manage the progression of employee career paths. Consequently, it may lead to greater job satisfaction (Theodossiou and Zangelisa, 2009; Wilkens and Nermerich, 2011; Ismail et.al.. 2013) and career commitment (Ferreira et al., 2007; Hirschi, 2009). Therefore, it was hypothesized that:

H1: There is a positive correlation between career planning and job satisfaction

H2: There is a positive correlation between career management and job satisfaction

H3: There is a positive correlation between career planning and career commitment

H4: There is a positive correlation between career management and career commitment

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Research Design

A cross-sectional research design was employed in this study because it permits the researchers to integrate the organizational career literature, the unstructured interview, the pilot study and the actual survey as a main procedure to gather data. As suggested by prominent researchers (Cresswell, 1998; Sekaran, 2000), this method able to gather accurate data, less bias data and high quality data in social science research. The location of this study was a military based university in Malaysia. At the initial stage of this study, survey questionnaire was drafted based on the organizational career program literature. Next, unstructured interview was conducted involving two experienced HR managers and two experienced supporting staff in the human resource management department of the organization. The information gained from the interview method helped the researchers to understand the features of career planning, career management, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment, as well as the correlation between such variables in the context of this study. After that, a pilot study was conducted by discussing the survey questionnaire with the interviewed participants in order to verify the content and format of the questionnaire for an actual study. Hence, a back translation technique was employed to translate the survey questionnaires into Malay and English versions in order to enhance the validity and reliability of the instrument (Hulland, 1999; Wright, 1996).

3.2 Measures

The survey questionnaire consisted of three major sections: first, career planning had 3 items and career management had 3 items that were modified from career program literature (Hirschi, 2009; Ismail et al., 2013; Janeiro,

2010; Theodossiou and Zangelis, 2009; Wilkens and Nermerich, 2011). Second, job satisfaction had 6 items that were modified from job satisfaction literature (Chen et al., 2004; Knoop, 1993; Hackman and Oldham, 1975; Linz, 2003; Nachbagauer and Riedl, 2002). Third, career commitment had 6 items that were adapted from career commitment literature (Chen et al., 2004; Colarelli and Bishop, 1990; Nachbagauer and Riedl, 2002). All these items were measured using a 7-item scale ranging from "strongly disagree/dissatisfied" (1) to "strongly agree/satisfied" (7). This study emphasizes on employee attitudes, so demographic variables were used as controlling variables.

3.3 Sample

A convenient sampling technique was used to distribute 200 survey questionnaires to employees in the organization. This sampling technique was chosen because the list of registered employees in the organization was not given to the researchers for confidential reasons, and this condition did not allow the researchers to randomly select participants.

From the total number, 92 usable questionnaires were returned to the researchers, yielding a 46 percent response rate. The survey questionnaires were answered by participants based on their consent. This figure exceeds the minimum sample of 30 participants as required by probability sampling technique, showing that it can be analyzed using inferential statistics (Sekaran, 2000; Leedy and Omrod, 2005).

3.4 Data Analysis

The SmartPLS version 2.0 was employed to analyze the survey questionnaire data. According to Henseler *et al*. (2009) the advantage of using SmartPLS has the ability produce latent variable scores, avoids small sample size problems, estimate every complex model with many latent and manifest variables, hassle-stringent assumptions about the distribution of variables and error terms, as well as handle both reflective and formative measurement models. In this statistical package, confirmatory factor analysis was used to determine the validity and reliability of the instrument and test the hypothesized model. The results of SmartPLS path analysis can show clearly the significant relationship between the independent variable and dependent variable if the value of t statistic larger than 1.96. While, the value of R^2 is used as an indicator of the overall predictive strength of the model. For example, the value of R^2 is considered as follows; 0.19 (weak), 0.33 (moderate) and 0.67 (substantial) (Chin, 1998). Further, a global fit measure is conducted to validate the adequacy of PLS path model globally based on Wetzels et al.'s (2009) global fit measure. This result confirms that the PLS path model has better explaining power in comparison with the baseline values (GoF small=0.1, GoF medium=0.25, GoF large=0.36). If the results of testing hypothesized model greater than the cut-off value of 0.36 for large effect sizes of R^2, showing that it adequately support the PLS path model globally.

4. Findings and interpretation of the study

4.1 Respondent Characteristics

Table 1 shows that the majority of respondents were males (52.2 percent), aged between 28 to 32 years old (47.8 percent), diploma holders (39.1), employees who served from 1 to 5 years (88 percent), and employees who have monthly salaries starting from RM1001 to RM2000 (41.3 percent).

Table 1.

Participant Characteristics (N=92)

Participant Characteristics	Sub-Profile	Percentage
Gender	Male	52.2
	Female	47.8
Age	< 27 years old	25.0
	28 to 32 years old	47.8
	33 to 37 years old	19.6
	38 to 42 years old	3.3
	> 43 years old	4.3
Education	Degree	30.4
	Diploma	39.1
	STPM	12.0
	SPM	18.5
Length of Service	1 to 5 years	88.0
	6 to 10 years	8.7
	11 to15 years	1.1
	16 to 20 years	2.2
Monthly Salary	< RM800	4.3
	RM801 to 1000	8.7
	RM1001 to 2000	41.3
	RM2001 to 3000	29.3
	RM3001 to 4000	9.8
	RM4001 to 5000	5.4
	> RM5000	1.1

Note:

SPM/MCE : Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia/ Malaysia Certificate of Education
STPM/HSC : Sijil Tinggi Pelajaran Malaysia/Higher School Certificate
RM : Malaysian Ringgit

4.2 Validity and reliability of the instrument

A confirmatory factor analysis was employed to determine the validity and reliability of the instrument. Table 1 shows the results of convergent and discriminant validity analyses. All constructs had the values of average variance extracted (AVE) larger than 0.5, indicating that they met the acceptable standard of convergent validity (Barclay et al., 1995; Fornell and Larcker, 1981; Henseler et al., 2009). Besides that, all constructs which had the diagonal values of √ AVE were greater than the squared correlation with other constructs in off diagonal, showing that all constructs met the acceptable standard of discriminant validity (Henseler et al., 2009).

Table 2.

The Results of Convergent and Discriminant Validity Analyses

Construct	AVE	Career Planning	Career Management	Career Satisfaction	Career Commitment
Career Planning	0.7468	**0.8642**			
Career Management	0.7537	0.3643	**0.8682**		
Job Satisfaction	0.7745	0.2847	0.7254	**0.8801**	
Career Commitment	0.7313	0.2907	0.6322	0.6683	**0.8552**

Table 3 shows the factor loadings and cross loadings for different constructs. The correlation between items and factors had higher loadings than other items in the different constructs. The variables loaded more strongly on their own constructs in the model, exceeding the specified minimum, 0.7 (Chin, 1998; Fornell and Larcker, 1981; Gefen and Straub, 2005). This result showed that the measurement model met the acceptable criterion of validity analysis .

Table 3.

The Results of Factor Loadings and Cross Loadings for Different Constructs

Construct/Item	Career Planning	Career Management	Job Satisfaction	Career Commitment
Career Planning				
CP1	**0.842336**	0.262703	0.277325	0.248341
CP2	**0.882776**	0.231424	0.213762	0.163963
CP3	**0.866983**	0.419996	0.236740	0.312304
Career Management				
CM1	0.252536	**0.919823**	0.719586	0.651371
CM2	0.304364	**0.895471**	0.648401	0.502677
CM3	0.428832	**0.782972**	0.494973	0.471977
Job Satisfaction				
JS1	0.384473	0.612719	**0.856431**	0.491083
JS2	0.324544	0.717839	**0.842749**	0.549347
JS3	0.142369	0.579816	**0.908328**	0.614452
JS4	0.210937	0.673141	**0.901849**	0.628391
JS5	0.167602	0.657759	**0.908599**	0.658775
JS6	0.323462	0.588076	**0.851995**	0.577377
JS7	0.190335	0.611394	**0.887806**	0.593603
Career Commitment				
CC1	0.213979	0.486172	0.501290	**0.870346**
CC2	0.169410	0.466661	0.539675	**0.813694**
CC3	0.157777	0.486039	0.584282	**0.876580**
CC4	0.224976	0.620872	0.630166	**0.932079**
CC5	0.370069	0.560509	0.565227	**0.832456**
CC6	0.319182	0.584374	0.588162	**0.798674**

Table 4 shows the results of reliability analysis for the instrument. The composite reliability and Cronbach's Alpha had values greater than 0.8, indicating that the instrument used in this study had high internal consistency (Henseler et al., 2009; Nunally and Benstein, 1994).

Table 4.

Composite Reliability and Cronbach's Alpha

Construct	Composite Reliability	Cronbach Alpha
Career Planning	0.898440	0.832217
Career Management	0.901334	0.835871
Job Satisfaction	0.960040	0.951342
Career Commitment	0.942138	0.926123

4.3 Analysis of the Constructs

Table 5 presents the results of Pearson correlation analysis and descriptive statistics. The mean values for the variables are between 4.3 and 5.9, signifying that the levels of career planning, career management, job satisfaction and career commitment ranging from high (4) to highest (7). The correlation coefficients for the relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable were less than 0.90, showing that the data were not affected by serious collinearity problem (Hair et al., 1998). All constructs had a value 1 as shown in a diagonal, indicating that the constructs met the acceptable criterion of reliability analysis. Further, these statistical results confirm that the constructs used in this study met the acceptable standards of validity and reliability analyses as illustrated in Table 3.

Table 5.

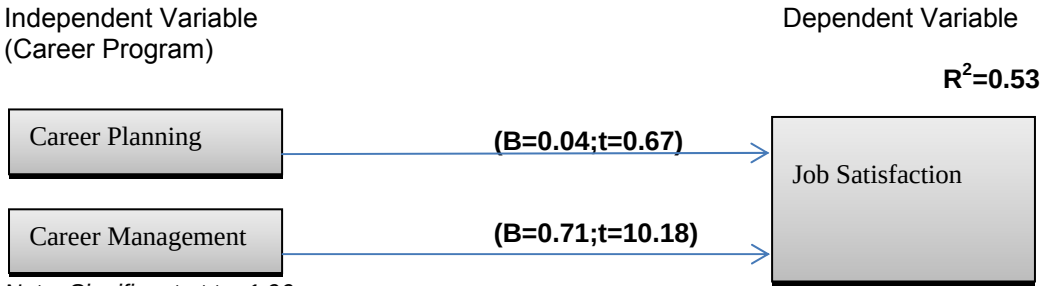
Pearson Correlation Analysis and Descriptive Statistics

Construct	Mean	Standard Deviation	Pearson Correlation Analysis			
			1	2	3	4
Career Planning	5.9	0.74	1			
Career Management	5.2	1.1	.37**	1		
Job Satisfaction	5.1	1.2	.28**	.71**	1	
Career Commitment	4.3	1.1	.28**	.62**	.67**	1

*Note: Significant at *p<0.05; **p<0.01; **p<0.000*
Reliability Estimation is shown in a diagonal

4.4 Outcomes of Testing Hypotheses 1 and 2

Figure 1 presents the results of SmartPLS path model analysis. In terms of explanatory model, the inclusion of career planning and career management in the model analysis had explained 53 percent of the variance in job satisfaction. Specifically, the outcomes of testing research hypothesis showed two important findings: first, career planning positively and insignificantly correlated with job satisfaction (β=0.04; t=0.67), therefore H1 was not supported. Second, career management positively and significantly correlated with job satisfaction (β=0.71; t=10.18), therefore H2 was supported.



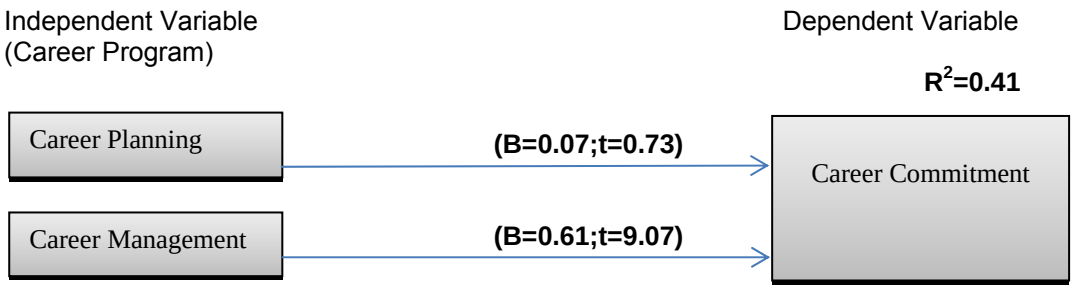
Note: Significant at t > 1.96

Figure 1. Outcomes of SmartPLS Path Model Analysis

In order to determine a global fit PLS path modeling, we carried out a global fit measure (GoF) based on Wetzels et al.'s (2009) guideline as follows: GoF=SQRT{MEAN (Communality of Endogenous) x MEAN (R^2)}=0.40, indicating that it exceeds the cut-off value of 0.36 for large effect sizes of R^2. It also provides adequate support to validate the PLS model globally (Wetzel et al., 2009).

4.5 Outcomes of Testing Hypotheses 3 and 4

Figure 2 presents the results of SmartPLS path model analysis. In terms of explanatory model, the inclusion of career planning and career management in the model analysis had explained 41 percent of the variance in organizational commitment. Specifically, the outcomes of testing research hypothesis showed two important findings: first, career planning positively and insignificantly correlated with organizational commitment (β=0.07; t=0.73), therefore H3 was not supported. Second, career management positively and significantly correlated with organizational commitment (β=0.61; t=9.07), therefore H4 was supported.



Note: Significant at t > 1.96

Figure 2. Outcomes of SmartPLS Path Model Analysis

In order to determine a global fit PLS path modeling, we carried out a global fit measure (GoF) based on Wetzels et al.'s (2009) guideline as follows: GoF=SQRT{MEAN (Communality of Endogenous) x MEAN (R^2)}=0.55, indicating that it exceeds the cut-off value of 0.36 for large effect sizes of R^2. It also provides adequate support to validate the PLS model globally (Wetzel et al., 2009).

5. Discussion

This study confirms that career planning does not act as an important predictor of job satisfaction and career commitment. While, career management does act as an important predictor of job satisfaction and career commitment in the organizational sample. In the context of this study, the majority respondents perceive that the levels of career planning, career management, job satisfaction and career commitment are high. This situation posits that managers have put a greater effort to plan and manage the progression of employee career paths, but it may not be able to enhance employees' job satisfaction and career commitment. Conversely, many efforts made by managers to appropriately manage the progression of employee career paths have enhanced employees' job satisfaction and career commitment in the organization.

This study provides three important implications: theoretical contribution, robustness of research methodology, and practical contribution. In terms of theoretical contribution, the results of this research reveal two important findings: firstly, career management has been an important predictor of job satisfaction and career commitment in the studied organization. This finding also has supported and broadened organizational career program studies by Ferreira et al. (2007); Hirschi (2009), Theodossiou and Zangelisa (2009), and Wilkens and Nermerich (2011). Secondly, career planning has not been an important predictor of job satisfaction and career commitment in the studied organization. A

thorough review of the unstructured interview results shows that this finding may be affected by external factors that are majority respondents feel that they have not received clear information about career planning and career planning designs have often changed when new leaders are appointed to hold senior management positions in the organization. This situation may decrease the effect of career planning on employee outcomes in the organization.

With respect to the robustness of research methodology, the survey questionnaires used in this study have met the acceptable criteria of validity and reliability analyses. This may lead to the production of accurate and reliable research findings. Further, regarding on practical contributions, the findings of this study may be used as guidelines by management to improve the administration of career programs in organizations. Some positive efforts that can be implemented are: first, career training content and methods should be updated in order to upgrade the awareness of employees in planning and managing their future careers. Second, communication openness should be implemented in order to increase employees' understanding about the advantages and consequences of engaging in the workplace career program. Third, participative decision making should be encouraged in order to get employees' bright ideas and this may help management to design and administer career programs that suit with the various job categories. Finally, the level of pay based on performance should be increased in order to attract, retain and motivate high performers continuously support their organizational strategic missions. If these suggestions are given more attention this may motivate employees to support and accept the workplace career goals and strategy.

6. Limitations and Future Directions

Like other empirical studies, this study is not without its limitations. Our sample consisted of one of the military based university in Malaysia may limit the generalizability of the results.The sample size itself is relatively small. The study can be strengthened by increasing the sample size and including participants in other private and public university staff. With an increased sample size, a more detailed empirical analysis among the independent variables and the variables that have multiple categories can be performed. Potential correlations between some of the independent variables (e.g. gender, age, education level, montyly income) need to be reported in future study.

7. Conclusion

This study suggested a conceptual framework based on the organizational career program literature. The instrument used in this study met the acceptable standards of validity and reliability analyses. The results of SmartPLS path model analysis showed that career management significantly correlated with job satisfaction and career commitment. This result also has supported and broadened previous studies mostly published in Western countries. Conversely, career planning insignificantly correlated with job satisfaction and career commitment. A thorough review of the unstructured interview results shows that this finding may be affected by two factors that is majority respondents feel that they have not received clear information about career planning and career planning designs have often changed when new leaders are appointed to hold senior management positions in the organization. This situation may decrease the effect of career planning on employee outcomes in the organization. Therefore, present research and practice in the human resource development models need to consider career planning and career management as key dimensions of the career program domain. Further, this research proposes that the willingness of management to appropriately plan and manage career programs based on employee needs and expectations will

strongly induce subsequent positive employee outcomes (e.g., commitment, engagement, performance, justice and ethics). Thus, these positive outcomes may lead to maintained and increased organizational competitiveness in an era of knowledge based economy.

The conclusion drawn from the results of this study should consider the following limitations. Firstly, the data was only taken once during the time frame of this study. Therefore, it did not capture the developmental issues such as intra-individual change and restrictions of making inference to participants and/or causal connections between variables of interest. Secondly, this study only examines the relationship between latent variables and the conclusion drawn from this study does not specify the relationship between specific indicators for the independent variable, mediating variable and dependent variable. Thirdly, this study only focused on particular elements of the workplace career and neglected other important elements (e.g., career path and management support). Fourthly, other career outcomes (e.g., performance, turnover, leadership, fairness and ethics) that are significant for organizations and employees are not discussed in this study. Fifthly, although a substantial amount of variance in dependent measures explained by the significant predictors is identified, there are still a number of unexplainable factors that can be incorporated to identify the causal relationship among variables and their relative explanatory power (Tabachnick et al., 2001). Finally, the sample for this study was taken using a convenient sampling technique in a single government organization. These limitations may decrease the ability of generalizing the results of this study to other organizational settings.

The conceptual and methodology limitations of this study need to be considered when designing future research. Firstly, the organizational and personal characteristics that act as a potential variable and can affect the effectiveness of workplace career should be further discovered. If organizational and personal characteristics are used in research, this may provide meaningful perspectives for understanding the individual differences and similarities that affect training outcomes. Secondly, the weaknesses of cross-sectional research design may be overcome if longitudinal studies are used to collect data and describe the patterns of change and the direction and magnitude of causal relationships between variables of interest. Thirdly, the findings of this study may produce different results if it is done in more than one organization. Fourthly, as an extension of career development, other theoretical constructs of career development such as readiness to acquire necessary knowledge, up to date skills, new abilities and positive attitudes, individual talents, and motivation to transfer knowledge, skills, abilities and positive attitudes in the workplace are important components should to be considered because they have been widely recognized as an important link between career program and personal outcomes. Fifthly, besides job satisfaction and career commitment, other personal outcome constructs need to be examined because they are found important in the workplace career research literature, such as career performance, job stress, trust, and ethics. The importance of these issues needs to be further discussed in the future studies.

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