

# Relationship between career management and career satisfaction

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## Abstract

**Aims:** Nowadays organizations play an important role in career management because of the change in career models. Career management functions helps individuals to achieve valuable goals. This study was conducted to investigate the relationship between career management functions and career satisfaction among the employees of a military unit.

**Methods:** In a descriptive correlation study in 2011, 92 employees of a military unit were selected by random sampling method. *Kong et al.* model was used for evaluating career management and *Greenhaus et al.* model was used for the evaluating career satisfaction. Data were analyzed by SPSS 16 software using Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, one sample T-test, simple regression and stepwise regression.

**Results:** There was a significant positive relationship between career management functions and career satisfaction ( $p < 0.05$ ). Furthermore, the effect of all career management functions on career satisfaction came out to be significant ( $p < 0.05$ ) and forecasted about 86% of dependent variable variation.

**Conclusion:** Career management functions including career evaluation, development and training have strong positive impact on career satisfaction in the studied military unit.

**Keywords:** Career, Career Management, Career Satisfaction, Subjective Career Success

## Introduction

In today's business environment, organizations play a vital role in the systems of career. The career management, known as organizational support which strives to develop the career or organizational support, refers to schemes, processes and assistances which the organization provides for the employees so as to support and increase success at career [1]. In other words, management of organizational and career refers to the activities which the organization undertake to manage the employee's career which encompasses, in itself, a wide range of schemes and interactions, based on the needs of individualistic and organizational career. It may include, in the form of quite official and semiformal activities, educational courses, the centers for assessing the direction and consultation of career [2]. The provision of schemes, such as plans for the development of career for the employees of the organization, may be interpreted on the part of the employees as the organization's care for their contribution and welfare [3] which, in turn, make the employee's job satisfaction and therefore increases their output and decreases mental pressures and non-compliant with organizational regulations. Also, it creates in the employees a good feeling for staying in the organization and as such the employees feel successful [4].

On the basis of *Hughes's* studies, the success at the

career is divided into two dimensions of objective and subjective [5]. The objective components of the success at career include observable consequences such as payment, promotion, the ascendancy and occupational status [6]. But the subjective success at the career is defined as the degree of satisfaction with career [7, 8]. In recent years the subjective measurement of success at career have been emphatically emphasized and most of researchers' attentions have been devoted to subjective criteria as one of the important forecaster of satisfaction with career [9]. Some of these subjective consequences include the development of new skills, the (establishment of) balance between personal and working life and the challenging nature of work for the individuals [10]. The deficiency in traditional objective criteria such as payment and promotion in satisfaction is evident in, for example, civil and military services. Individuals are not only seeks objective consequences and these consequences do not necessarily create in them satisfaction. For example, the high school's teacher or the university's master may count their success at career on the students' learning of difficult data or their other successes. Similarly, a taxi driver may count his/her success on those years of driving without of any accident or doctors based on the number of patients whose lives they saved etc. [7]. Therefore, if individuals' assessment of their own situation is positive, a feeling

of satisfaction is established in them. Due to the importance of subjective criteria in the satisfaction of career, in this study, the focus is on subjective criteria. The organization's approaches to create satisfaction could comprise different plans. Some of them include education, mentoring, performance appraisal and developing plans for the employees [1].

*Kong et al.* define the organizational career management as including of three activities, that is, the career appraisal, career development and career training [11]:

1) The appraisal of career covers clear feedback elements in terms of work, the consultation about career, negotiations about career, schemes for the justification of career and the performance appraisal of 360 degree [11]. The performance appraisal of 360 degree, which is called multidirectional (multi-sources) or multi-faceted appraisal, is a kind of intra-organizational cyclic feedback provider which refers to the employee's assessment and the provision of feedback by the subordinates and organizational same-level people and supervisors [12].

2) The career development refers to the opportunities which the organization provides for the employees so as to improve their career [13]. These schemes, if they meet the needs and objectives of the individuals, will create a sense of satisfaction within them [14].

3) Career training: In the training course, the employees will be taught to make an active scheme about career in order to enable them to define and base the objective of their own career [15]. To educate, the inspection, workshops and intra-organizational education approaches are employed [11].

According to the studies *Burke* in 2001 and *Burke and McKeen* in 1995, support, encouragement, training, development and challenging jobs are essentially interconnected with managers' women career satisfaction [16]. Diverse researches support the existence of positive relation between the career management and career satisfaction [10]. According to *NG et al.*, the career management activities such as job rotation plans, support (financial helps), the training and the plans of the development of career are in positive relation with career satisfaction. The organizations try to increase the employee's satisfaction in career by effective supports such as education, performance appraisal and challenging works [1]. *Orpen & Pazy* found a rather positive and significant relationship between the two variables of organizational supports for career and the employee's career satisfaction [10]. *Wiese et al.* indicated the positive effects of career management behaviours on the subjective success at the career [10]. Also, *Allen et*

*al., Armstrongstassen & Ursel, Baruch & Rosenstein* maintain that organizations, as result of supporting career such as education, performance appraisal, etc. and also by creating these feelings among employees that supported of them, will increase the their career satisfaction [1]. *Yarnall* found in a study the strong relation between the support of management and career satisfaction. Furthermore, *Yarnall* and some other researchers such as *Allen et al., Aryee & Chay* emphasized the relation between consultation and career satisfaction and indicated employees who are provided for them the opportunity to converse with their supervisor about career, will have higher commitment and career satisfaction [17]. This study was done with the aim of the investigation of the relation between the career management and its functions from the organization and career satisfaction among the employees in a military unit.

## Methods

This field study is of descriptive nature and collaborative method which was done during the time period of March to June 2011. The sample under investigation was the employees of a military unit of 120 individuals. The sample volume was selected 92 individuals according to Morgan Table and the individuals under investigation were selected using simple accidental sampling method.

In research model, the variables of the career development, career appraisal and the career training are exogenous and the variable of career satisfaction is endogenous. The career management was recognized as independent variable and career satisfaction was recognized as dependent variable. To evaluate the career management, the *Kong et al.*'s item eleven scale [11] was used and to evaluate the career satisfaction, *Greenhaus et al.*'s five-question scale [18] was employed. In these questionnaires, the likert five-option scale is employed. The validity of study instruments was confirmed using the content validity and to determine reliability, the alpha Cronbach method was used. All variables in the military unit under investigation were in the intermediate position (Table 1). The calculated Alpha for the questionnaire of the career management was 83% and for the questionnaire of the career satisfaction was 89%. The rate of Alpha in the questionnaire of the career management in *Kong et al.* was equivalent to 90% and the rate of Alpha in the questionnaire of the career satisfaction in *Greenhaus et al.*'s study was equivalent to 88% and in *Hofmans et al.* was equivalent to 74% [9].

According to the results of Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, research variables were comprised of normal distribution. So, to analyze the data, parametric tests were used with the help of SPSS 16 software. To analyze the relation between research variables, the simple regression test was employed and to determine the extent of the effects of each function of the career management, multi-variable regression test (stepwise) was used.

**Table 1-** Testing the mean of research variables

Statistics→ ↓Variable	Mean	SD	Level of significance
Career management	2.74	0.66	0.0001
Career appraisal	2.80	0.78	0.018
Career development	2.68	0.66	0.0001
Career training	2.75	0.94	0.014
Career satisfaction	2.79	0.72	0.008

**Table 2-** The result of simple regression test for the anticipation of the career satisfaction by secondary variables of the research

Dependent variable	Independent variable	Beta	Standard error	Beta standard coefficient	Coefficient of determination	t	Level of significance
Career Satisfaction	Fix rate	0.90	0.19	-	-	4.68	0.0001
	Career appraisal	0.68	0.06	0.73	0.54	10.20	
	Fix rate	1.01	0.25	-	-	3.99	
	Career development	0.66	0.09	0.60	0.37	7.22	
	Fix rate	1.18	0.15	-	-	7.77	
	Career training	0.59	0.05	0.76	0.58	11.26	

## Results

76% of the samples under investigation were male and 24% were female. Among these, 22% were holding Master of Arts degree, 56% Bachelor degree, 13% were holding associate degree and the rest were holding diploma and under diploma. 31% of the respondents were under 30, 52% were between 30 and 50 and 17% were above 50 years of age. Also, 88% of these subjects were married and in terms of work experience, 55.6% had less than 10 years, 36% had between 10 and 20 years, and the rest had more than 20 years of work experience.

The variables of career appraisal, career development and career training had a positive and significant relation with the variable of career and according to coefficient of determination, 54% of the reason for the employee's satisfaction was due to the career

appraisal, 37% was due to the career development and 58% was due to the career training (Table 2).

Also, there was a significant relation between career satisfaction and career management and considering coefficient of determination, 73% of the reason for the employee's satisfaction was due career management. As a result, the main hypothesis of the research was confirmed (Table 3).

The relation between career training, career appraisal and career development with career satisfaction was significant. Among them, training had the great effect on the career satisfaction and it, alone, could predict 58% of the variance of dependent variable. In the second stage, in which the appraisal variable entered the equation, there was an increase of this effect, amounting 69%. In the final stage with the advent of all three functions of career (training, appraisal and development), this effect reached to 73% (Table 4).

**Table 3-** The result of simple regression test for the investigation of the relationship between career management and career satisfaction

Dependent variable	Independent variable	Beta	Standard error	Beta standard coefficient	Coefficient of determination	t	Level of significance
Career Satisfaction	Fix rate	0.22	0.17	-	-	1.31	0.195
	Career Management	0.94	0.06	0.86	0.73	15.68	0.0001

**Table 4-** The results of multi-variable regression test (stepwise)

Criterion variable	Predictor variable	Multiple correlation coefficient (R)	Coefficient of determination	F	t	Beta non-standardized coefficient	Beta standardized coefficient	Level of significance
Career Satisfaction	Training	0.77	0.58	126.889	11.264	0.59	0.76	0.0001
	Training	0.83	0.69	101.211	6.80	0.38	0.51	
	Appraisal	-	-	-	5.65	0.38	0.42	
	Training	0.86	0.73	81.453	5.16	0.30	0.39	
	Appraisal	-	-	-	5.65	0.36	0.39	
	Development	-	-	-	3.67	0.26	0.24	

## Discussion

With respect to the importance of human resources in achieving organizations' objectives (particularly military units holding strategic positions), considering the factors which affect employee's satisfaction seems necessary. As the results show, the career management is an extremely vital factor in the satisfaction with career and determines about 73% of the variable of the career satisfaction. These findings correspond with *Baruch & Rosenstein, Orpen, Yarnall, Eby et al., Allen et al., Armstrongstassen & Ursel, Kong et al.*'s findings [1, 10, 11, 17, 19]. Among functions of career management, the coefficient of determination for the two functions of appraisal and training was predicted as high and for the development function was predicted as rather low. Previously, *Kong et al., Allen et al. and Yap et al.* [1, 20], investigated the relation between training and career satisfaction and also indicated the relation between them.

According to the result of stepwise regression test, training was recognized as the superior element of creating employee's satisfaction in military environment. This could be ascribed to indexes related to sampling statistics since most of them were having less than 10 years of work experience. In fact, they were spending the first years of their services. As such, they were after gaining required skills so as to perform better a given task and after being taught to appropriately plan their career. After training, appraisal criterion had the most coefficient of determination in the career satisfaction. In this course of line, individuals usually tend to get feedback from principles, colleagues, and even subordinates about their own work functions and probably due to the sensitivity of military works for the employees, the proper accomplishment of the works is of high importance. This finding corresponds with *NG et al. and Kong et al.*'s research findings [1, 11]. Finally, the variable of career development had a significant relation with dependent variable and determined 37% of career satisfaction. This finding also corresponds with *Chen et al., Barnett & Bradley's* research findings [10, 14].

In this research all the variables were in the middle status. Therefore, the above organization must provide approaches to increase the function of career management (due to their high correlation with career satisfaction). For example, it would be possible to ask individuals to participate in the behaviour of career management and to provide diverse educational programmes such as external study and visit, In-house training programs trainings, career workshops, to teach work skills and improvement plan for the

employees. On the other side, assessing function could be counted as the entrance of career planning. Using the modern methods of getting feedback such as 360 degree feedback methods, in which all the employees and organizational authorities in a managed commitment-taking cycle feel responsible towards each other's functions and strive to increase each other's organizational functions without any kind of organizational lobby, could help the organization achieve its goals. Since the organizational teaching along this feedback will provide for increasing individual and organizational function, organizational, functional commitment. On the other side, considering the relation between career development and satisfaction with career, organizational executors should do the necessary actions to take into account and to achieve the objectives of career development such as career development, development of skills related to work, effective management of work area etc. From another perspective, usually individuals, who are after higher levels of work functions, search for higher levels of training and development opportunities. Therefore, the organizations' support both in terms of material and non-material could increase these individuals' satisfaction.

Since this study was done in a military unit and with particular variables, therefore, it could not be expanded to all military organizations. So, along this study, it would be possible to further investigate the variables of success at career both objective and subjective and also its subjective and behavioural consequences of functions of career management among different military units.

## Conclusion

The functions of career management, including career appraisal, career development, and the career training in military units under investigation, will have a strong and positive effect on the career satisfaction.

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