



Career Motivation and Job Satisfaction: A Study Among Hospitality Employees

Audrey Dubah Janu¹, Agatha Lamentan Muda^{2*}, Farida Abdul Halim³ and Nur Fatimah Abdullah Bandar⁴

^{1,2,3,4} Universiti Malaysia Sarawak, 94300 Kota Samarahan, Sarawak, Malaysia

ABSTRACT

This study examined the relationship between career motivation and job satisfaction among hospitality employees of one hotel in Sri Aman, Sarawak. A cross-sectional survey design was employed to conduct the study. The data of study was collected using self-administered survey questionnaires among 80 employees that were chosen using simple random sampling. Data was analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Specifically, the Pearson's product-moment correlation was used to test the research hypotheses. Results indicated that the sub-components of career motivation; career resilience, career insight and career identity were significantly and positively correlated with employees' job satisfaction.

Keywords: Career Motivation; Career Resilience; Career Insight; Career Identity; Job Satisfaction

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INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF STUDY

Keeping employees engaged and satisfied takes more than just a good pay and benefits. According to the SHRM (2016) report, most employees rated respectful treatment as among the most important factors of job satisfaction. Besides, job satisfaction is of-

ten determined by how well the outcomes meet or exceed expectations. People who enjoy their job are apt to spend time learning more about it and associating with people who are also involved. Those who report enjoying their jobs are expected to have strong career motivation or vice versa (Umit Almacik, Esra Almacik, Kultigin Akcin and Sehat Erat, 2012).

Career motivation can be defined as a multidimensional construct internal to the individual and is influenced by situation and reflected in the individual's decision and behaviors (London, 1983). According to Umit Almacik et. al (2012), this variable is among important factors that are related to

ARTICLE INFO

E-mail address:

malamentan@unimas.my (Agatha Lamentan Muda)

*Corresponding author

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and influence employees' job satisfaction. Specifically, the concept of career motivation integrates individual differences into three domains: career resilience, career insight, and career identity.

Traditionally, the career motivation theory is used to understand career related attitudes and behaviours of employees. Noe, Noe, and Bachhuber (1990) found that individuals were more likely to have high level of career motivation when their managers were supportive, provide clear performance feedback, encouraged subordinates to set career goals, initiated discussion related to development and career-related issue and made the job challenging. In recent research, career motivation affects the way employees choose and view their careers, the effort they work on it, as well as the time they stay in them (Werner and DeSimone, 2012). In relation to the above, the purpose of this study is to determine the relationship between career motivation and job satisfaction.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

The hotel industry has been recognized as one of the important potential prospects for the growth of the service industry in Malaysia. However, the development of this industry is impeded by the high turnover rates of employees. Most hotel providers are facing difficulties in retaining employees, and are unable to identify relevant factors that contributed to their employees' satisfaction and loyalty. One of the factors that influence the job satisfaction of employee is career motivation (Umit Almacik et al., 2012). Since the mid of 1980's, numerous studies have addressed career motivation theory, its

measurement, association with individual characteristics and firm level variables (London, 1983, London and Mone, 1987; Noe et al., 1990; Grzeda and Prince 1997; Fox, 1997; London and Noe, 1997). Nonetheless, research on the relationship between career motivation, job satisfaction, organizational commitment and employment and turnover intentions is scarce (Umit Almack et al. 2012). Therefore, this study attempts to examine the relationship between career motivation and job satisfaction. Specifically, in this study, career motivation consists of career resilience, career insight and career identity.

OBJECTIVES OF STUDY

- To study the relationship between career motivation (career resilience, career insight and career identity) and job satisfaction

RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

- H_{a1}: There is a significant relationship between career resilience and job satisfaction.
- H_{a2}: There is a significant relationship between career insight and job satisfaction.
- H_{a3}: There is a significant relationship between career identity and job satisfaction.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Career motivation

Career motivation is a multidimensional concept that can be categorized into three domains which are career resilience, career insight and career identity (London, 1983, 1985; London and Mone, 1987). Career resilience is the ability to adapt to changing circumstances, even when the circumstances

are discouraging or disruptive. Career resilience is conceptually similar to Holland's notion that career decisions are influenced by the ability to face barriers, the need for information and reassurance, and vocational identity (Holland, Daiger and Power, 1980). In addition, career resilience is also conceptually similar to the concept of hardiness (Kobasa, Maddi, and Kahn, 1982), self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997), and achievement motivation (McClelland, 1965).

Career resilience is also similar to the idea of flexibility in Dawis and Lofquist's (1984)'s theory of work adjustment. Work adjustment depends on the congruence between individual abilities and the requirements of the job and the congruence between individual needs and reinforces in the environment. People who are strong in work adjustment are characteristically strong in perseverance, flexibility, and reactivity (London, 1983). A past study by Hannon (2012) stated that when employees have gain career resilience, they can create a more successful career path and at the same time find greater enjoyment and satisfaction in their workplace. A more recent study by Rahmawati (2013) stated that career resilience has impact on employees' job performance, commitment and satisfaction.

On the other hand, career insight is the ability to be realistic about oneself and one's career and to put these perceptions to be used in establishing goals. In other word, career insight means one's ability to establish clear goals and know their strengths and weaknesses, which is similar to Super's vocational self-concept called crystallization (Super, Starishevsky, Matlin, and Jordaan, 1963). McLeod (2018) indicated that by

working toward goals, employees end up getting much more than their desired outcomes. McLeod (2018) also added, setting and achieving meaningful career goals provides three essential career nutrients which are increased job satisfaction, higher self-esteem and improve quality of employees' life.

Meanwhile, career identity is the extent to which one defines oneself by work. It consists of job, organization, and professional involvement and needs for advancement, recognition, and leadership role. In addition, career identity is conceptually similar to work commitment, organizational commitment (Salancik, 1997) and organizational citizenship (Organ, 1988). Past study by Duan, Situ, Tao, Deng, Wu, Zhou, Zheng and Xu (2011) indicating that employee, with high career identity and job satisfaction usually do their job better and achieve more supported this study. According to Umit Almack et.al (2012), employees with high score on career identity tend to be highly involved in the job and organization and they demonstrate a high need for advancement and promotion.

Job satisfaction

According to Locke (1976), job satisfaction is a result of employee's perception of how well his or her job provides things that are viewed as important. In addition, job satisfaction is also commonly defined as pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from appraisal of one's job or job experience (Locke, 1976). According to Poczowski, (2003), the level of job satisfaction experienced by an employee is dependent on the amount of wages, advancement opportunities, management style, content of

work, interpersonal relations, working condition, work organization, management and corporate reputation. Other factors that positively influence employees' job satisfaction are interesting work, well-paid jobs, the possibility of advancement, good superiors and good relationship with co-worker (Makin, Cooper and Cox, 2000).

On a different note, Amstrong, (2004) indicated that job satisfaction can be develop by focusing on the internal factors of motivation such as responsibility, achievement and recognition, where managers should be figuring out different ways of delegating responsibility to give employees space and freedom to use their skill and abilities. A high level of job satisfaction increases employee's commitment to work and free them from stress and burnout while lack of job satisfaction increases employees' absenteeism (Sarmiento, Laschinger and Iwasiw, 2004). Based on the past studies and literature review of job satisfaction, the independent variable of the study, that is career motivation, was chosen.

Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory

Herzberg (1959) constructed a two-

dimensional paradigm of factors that affects people's attitudes about work; hygiene factor and motivator factor. Based on this theory, factors like company policy, supervision, interpersonal relations, working conditions and salary are hygiene factors rather than motivators, and the absence of hygiene factors can create job dissatisfaction. Nevertheless, their presence do not motivate or create satisfaction. In contrast, the motivators are elements that enrich person's job. According to Herzberg, there are five factors that are consider as strong determinants of job satisfaction: achievement, recognition, the work itself, responsibility and advancement. These motivators (satisfiers) were associated with long-term positive effects in job performance while the hygiene factors (dissatisfiers) consistently produced only short-term changes in job attitudes and performance, which quickly fell back to its previous level. Satisfiers describe a person's relationship with what she or he does, much related to the tasks being performed. Dissatisfiers on the other hand have to do with person's relationship to the context or environment in which she or he performs the job. Hence this theory is used to explain the relationship between career motivation with

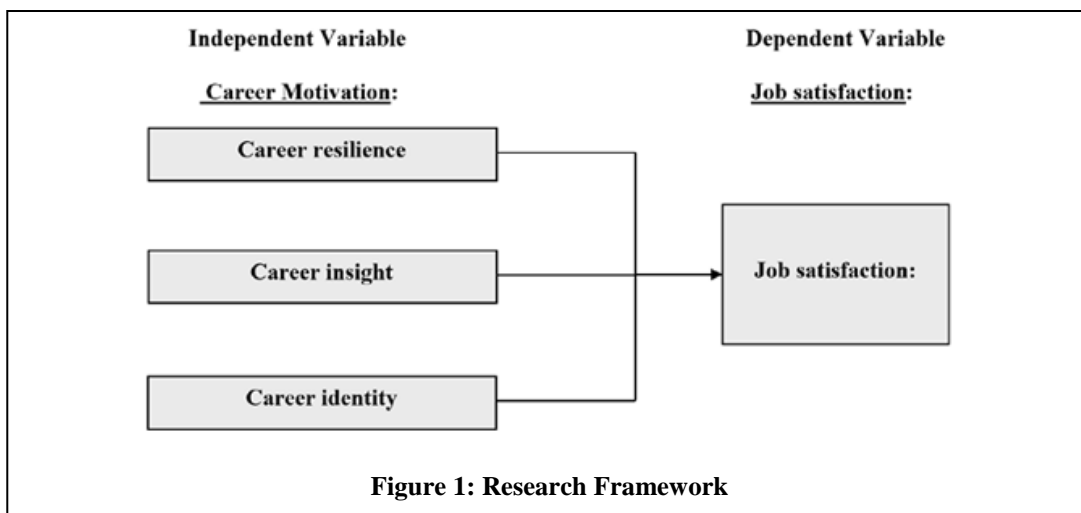


Figure 1: Research Framework

job satisfaction, and based on this theory, career motivation' sub-dimension that consists of career resilience, career insight and career identity fall under motivator factors.

Research framework

Based on past studies and related theory, the conceptual framework of the study as illustrated by Figure 1 was developed.

METHODOLOGY

A survey research was conducted in an attempt to examine the relationship between career motivation and job satisfaction. For hypotheses testing, a correlational approach was used to determine the relationship exists between variables of the study. The target population of this study were employees from one hotel in Sri Aman Sarawak, and a simple random sampling technique was used to gather data from employees. At the time of study, approximately 100 employees were eligible and the required sample size was 61 (Luck, Taylor and Robin, 1987). Nonetheless a total of 80 questionnaires were distributed and the same numbers were returned back.

A cross-sectional survey questionnaire was designed to collect data for the study. The questionnaire had three sections. Section one was on respondent's background. Section two was on career motivation that covers career resilience, career insight and career identity adapted from London (1993) and Noe et al. (1990). Section three was on job satisfaction adapted from Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire developed by Weiss, Dawis, England and Lofquist (1967).

All items used in the questionnaires were closed ended, in English and measured using the five-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly disagree" (1) to "strongly agree" (5). A pilot test was done prior to the actual study to determine the reliability and validity of the research instrument.

The data derived from the study were analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences for Windows Version 21. Prior to further analyses, several important steps were undertaken by researchers. Firstly, the responses to all items in the research questionnaire were classified and coded for the data entry. Subsequently the exploratory data analysis was performed to check for the normality, linearity and multicollinearity. Then the reliability of the data was examined using the Cronbach's alpha. The data of the study were analysed using the Pearson's Correlation analysis test.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Demographic characteristics of respondents

Majority of the respondents were male (52.1%), at the age between 21 years old to 30 years old (64.4%), Bumiputera Sarawak, in particular Bidayuh and Iban (69.9%), single (54.8%) hold a Malaysia Certificate of Education or known as Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (61.6%) and employees from three respective sections namely the front desk, food and beverage, and housekeeping's section (54.8%).

Relationship between career motivation and job satisfaction

Table 1: Relationship between career motivation (resilience, insight and identity) and job satisfaction

Career Motivation	Job Satisfaction	
	Pearson correlation, <i>r</i>	Significant value, <i>p</i>
Career resilience	0.534*	0.000
Career insight	0.239*	0.041
Career identity	0.366*	0.001

The result of the Pearson's product-moment correlation as in Table 1 indicates a significant, positive and moderate relationship between career resilience and job satisfaction; $r(80) = 0.534$, $p < 0.05$. Thus, the first hypothesis of the study was accepted and the result supported the past studies by Rahmawati (2013) and Hannon (2012). As for the relationship between career insight and job satisfaction, the findings as indicated in Table 1 shows a significant and positive but weak relationship; $r(80) = 0.239$, $p\text{-value} = p < 0.05$. Therefore, the second hypothesis of the study was accepted and the result supported past study by McLeod (2018). On the other hand, for the relationship between career identity and job satisfaction, the result similarly indicates a significant and positive but weak relationship; $r(80) = 0.366$, $p < 0.05$. Therefore, the third was accepted and the result supported past studies by Duan et.al (2011), and Umit Almack et.al (2012).

IMPLICATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

In overall, the findings of the study indicated significant and positive relationship between career motivation and job satisfaction among hospitality employees. Consequently, this contributes to the body of knowledge in the related fields of study. More im-

portantly this study provides a better understanding on the relationship between career motivation and job satisfaction that may become an essential guideline for the HR practitioners in hotel industry, future researchers, and at the same time provides empirical support on the practicality of the Herzberg's motivation theory. Also, the evidences drawn from this study has proved that career motivation's dimension particularly the career resilience, career insight and career identity as experienced by the employees, were significantly and positively associated with job satisfaction.

Consequently, several recommendations were proposed based on the findings of the study. For examples, create environment for risk taking, build employees' self-confidence through feedback and positive reinforcement and generate opportunities for achievement, and supply relevant information related to the attainment of career goals are among ways to support employees' career resilience and career insight. Besides, the management should also ensure that the employees are encouraged to involve in challenging job and professional growth, and being provided with relevant career development opportunities. In addition, employees' solid performance must be rewarded through professional recognition and financial bonuses. These help a lot in

building up employees' career identity. As employees are the most important group to ensure that the best quality services are provided to the customers, particularly in the service industry like hotel, it is important for the management to identify factors that affecting their job satisfaction as this state greatly influences the efficiency and effectiveness of employee's performance.

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