

Career Development and Employee Performance in Private University : a Study of UNTAG Semarang, Central Java, Indonesia

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Abstract. *This study was an attempt to explore the nexus between career development and employee job performance in UNTAG Semarang, Central Java, Indonesia. The study was necessitated following the need to institute career development programs in organizations for employees to acquire additional knowledge for improved job performance. This study was a survey-type of research that employed a correlational design in an attempt to ascertain the magnitude of the relationship between the studied variables. Structured questionnaires were administered to a sample size of 250 drawn from the population of the study. The Likert 5- point scale was used in quantifying responses while simple regression was employed in determining the degree of the relationship between career development and employee job performance. The result shows a strong relationship between career mentoring and the quality of employee job performance in the organization and concludes that organizations that wish to improve on employee job performance must institute and entrench career mentoring necessary for skill acquisition. The study recommends that organizations should encourage career counseling activities as a leeway to providing a sustainable framework upon which employees acquire the needed operational skills that will enhance their job performance in a typical organization.*

Keywords: *career mentoring, career counseling, skill assessment, job performance.*

INTRODUCTION

The emerging trend in today's changing business environment is orchestrated by the interplay of the various elements of the environment. The demands of meeting the challenges of the competitive nature of the business environment and the considerable upsurge in technological advancement, have stirred most organizations to lay emphasis on career development as a necessary condition in meeting the demands of the environment. Career Development Programs have evolved because of changes in the workforce (work-life balance, diversity, and focus on quality), advances in management theory (employee

motivation), changes in managerial styles, and the increasing complexity of technology. These contemporary trends have fostered the growth of career development Programmes (Agba, et al 2010).

In this 21st century, employees are no longer interested in pursuing just the job; their aspirations are to have an employment opportunity that will create an extension of interest, personality, and life-long work-related activities. When employees realize that they will have opportunities for development, and continual growth, they will be more committed to their workplace.

Agba, Nkpoyen, and Ushie (2010) asserted that where an employer can provide the worker with ample opportunities for growth and advancement, a proper attitude of loyalty and satisfaction can be enhanced. Manufacturing firms create enabling environment for career development through Human Resource Department that plans several career developments programs that will dovetail employees and the organization. Hameed and Waheed (2011) argue that when organizations contribute towards employee development activities, employees work harder, and utilize their skills and efforts fully to achieve the overall goal of the organization. "Career development is a concerted effort directed towards assessing workers potentials, identifying likely career paths for employees, designing and implementing various forms of training and experience to prepare them for more advanced jobs" (Stone, 2005).

Career development is a continual effort to match long-term individual and organizational needs. Therefore, career development is a planned program designed to match individual and organizational needs, while the personal dimensions allow for necessary changes in individuals to acquire skills and advance progressively throughout the period of their careers. There are several career development methods that can improve employee performance in an organization. Manufacturing firms used methods such as career counseling, career mentoring, and workshops, along with techniques such as self-assessment testing and job rotations to enhance their employees' opportunities for growth and development. Aldefer (2004) argues that career development is the process by which individuals collect information about values, interests, and skill strengths and weaknesses (career exploration), identify a career goal, and engage in career strategies that increase the

probability that career goals will be achieved. The career management process according to John (2000) involves career exploration, the development of career goals, and the use of career strategies to obtain career goals.

Career development according to Martin (2010) has increasingly become an indispensable index for skill acquisition, and operational capabilities considering the dynamic nature of the business environment to the point that the development of such capacities especially through training has heretofore emerged as a necessary requirement in preparing a long-term strategic plan of the organization. Kelvin (2009) sees career development as a sustained strategy for enhancing employee job performance in order to achieve a competitive advantage in the changing business environment. Thus, organizations strive to optimize their workforce through comprehensive career development programs in order to take abreast of its environment with respect to improved technologies, innovations, and market economies. This however will enable the organizations to achieve and sustain greater operational effectiveness and efficiency that will afford them greater leverage for success (Grey, 2005). As a result, Private Universities are increasingly demanding superior skills, increased productivity, and work-related knowledge from their workers. These demands however emphasize the need for career development in UNTAG Semarang.

UNTAG Semarang was incorporated on the 17th day of August 1963 with its headquarters at Pawiyatan Luhur, Semarang has graduated more than 39.568 students with accredited level "B". UNTAG Semarang is a Private University that has been a key player in Central Java with 8 professors, 71 Associate professors, 136 Senior Lecturers, 37 lecturers, and 20 Tutors.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Most private universities seems to be grappling with employees' counterproductive attitudes to work, which may be attributed to the management's inability to design an institutional framework that would allow for career development programs necessary for skill acquisition given the dynamism of the business environment. Employee work performance is low in UNTAG Semarang and this may be attributed to the dearth of career development schemes like career counseling, career mentoring, and on-the-job training.

These methods, however, create long-lasting experiences, and operational capabilities that culminate in improved organizational performance. The firm presently is faced with a lack of specialized career counselors to advise employees on the rightful career development methods within the context of organizational realities. This situation tends to undermine worker efficiency in service delivery, and the realization of organizational goals.

Employees of the UNTAG Semarang lack proper guidance for achieving career goals and expertise support to understand the system expectations which will enable them to be articulated and more prepared to handle roles as well as able to perform their work effectively (John, 2000). The aforementioned is orchestrated as a result of inadequate application of career mentoring. In addition, the efforts of employees are being affected by the monotony of work and lack of innovation that causes boredom, and work stress and affects interpersonal collaboration and work effectiveness. It would be difficult to determine the underlying net effect(s) of the interactions between career counseling on worker efficiency, career mentoring on quality of employee work performance, and skill assessment training on efforts of employees without research-based evidence, hence this study.

Conceptual Issues

Components of a Career Development Programme

The desired outcome of a Career Development Programme is to align employee needs with that of the organization. Employees must have the opportunity to identify career needs and the organization should assist them in achieving these needs within organizational realities. A Career Development Programme according to Robert (2005) does not require elaborate procedures. The essential components are career counseling, career mentoring, and skill assessment.

Career Counseling

One of the most logical and important aspects of the career development process is career counseling. An effective Career Counseling Programme does not only assist an organization in identifying employees with high-performance potential but also assists them in mapping out realistic career opportunities (Vincent, 2013). Career counseling according to John (2000) is concerned with instituting various skill acquisition programs that evolve

self-understanding; broadening one's horizons, work selection, challenge, satisfaction, and other interpersonal matters, work site behavior, communication, and other interpersonal phenomena, and lifestyle issues, such as balancing work, family, requirement.

According to Eisenberg and Delaney (2006), the aim of career counseling to employees are as follows; understanding self, making a personal decision, setting achievable goals which enhance growth and planning in the present to bring about desired future, coping with difficult solutions, controlling self-defeating emotions, acquiring effective transaction skills and acquiring positive self-regard and sense of optimism about one's own ability to satisfying one's basic needs. Therefore, the thrust of career counseling is to assist employees in exploiting their strengths and potential and avoiding mismatches between individual aspirations, capabilities, and organizational opportunities. It reduces the waste of preparing an employee for a position for which they are not suited, but might otherwise accept, in order to conform to the wishes of the organization (Martins, 2005).

Career Mentoring

Mentoring is a professional relationship in which an experienced employee (mentor) assists another less experienced employee (mentee) in developing specific skills and knowledge that will enhance the less experienced person's professional and personal growth. William, James, and Susan (2002) define a mentor as a corporate manager who supervises, coaches, and guides selected Lower – level employees by introducing them to the right people and generally being their organizational sponsor. In reality, an informal type of mentoring goes on in most organizations on a regular basis as older employees assist younger workers. Networking and having mentors is essential for succession planning because it builds and develops managers by widening their knowledge and a better understanding of the overall operations and preparing for tasks ahead. Alanna and Awujo (2005) define mentoring as the process of using specially selected and trained people to provide guidance and advice which will help to develop the careers of the people allocated to them to be more efficient in improving the quality of work. Mentoring is used to complement learning on the job which of course is the best way of obtaining particular knowledge and skills.

Skill Assessment

John (2000) opines that training and development is a technique used to transfer the employee's relevant skills, knowledge, and competence to improve employee performance on the current jobs and future assignments. John (2000) asserts that employee training is a necessary condition that predisposes employees to acquire certain skills, and knowledge especially given the dynamic nature of the business environment. Knowledge acquisition makes it absolutely imperative for employees to keep abreast of their environment with respect to an unprecedented upsurge in information and communication technology. The survival of any organization in a competitive society depends on its ability to train its human resource to be innovative, creative, and inventive which will invariably enhance performance and increase the organization's competitive advantage. Nwachukwu (2005) asserts that training is a short-term educational process utilizing a systematic and organized procedure by which non-managerial personnel learns technical knowledge and skills for a definite purpose. When an organization engages an employee to perform a certain job and for the task to perform adequately well, there is the need to train the employee to acquire the necessary knowledge, skills, and competencies to be able to execute the job effectively and efficiently.

RESEARCH METHODS

The study was a survey-type of research that employed a correlational design in an attempt to determine the direction and the magnitude of the relationship between the studied variables. A structured questionnaire drawn on 5 point scale rating was administered to a sample of 250 respondents drawn from the population of the study. The test re-test approach was employed such that the Cronbach alpha coefficient was used to determine the internal reliability of the research instrument. Therefore, the reliability result yielded Cronbach's alpha of 0.83, 0.80, and 0.78 for career counseling, career mentoring, and skill assessment, respectively, and 0.89 for career development. These levels of Cronbach's alpha were considered good indicators of the reliability of the instrument. For easy estimation, simple regression was employed in each hypothesis.

For Hypothesis one:

$$Cc = f(WF) \quad 1$$

Where Cc is career counseling, WF is worker efficiency.

Estimating Equation 1, there was a need to introduce stochastic error terms in order to minimize the variance of the scores. Therefore, Equations 1 was rewritten as:

$$Cc1 = a_0 + a_1WF + \mu \quad 2$$

Where μ is the error term.

H1 : There is a significant relationship between career counseling and worker efficiency

For Hypothesis two:

$$Cm = f(QE), \quad 3$$

Where Cm is career mentoring, QE is quality of employee job performance The aforementioned Equation was also rewritten by co-opting stochastic error terms.

$Cm1 = a_0 + a_1QE + \mu \quad 4$ H2: There is a significant relationship between career mentoring and quality of employee job performance

For Hypothesis three.

Where SA is skill assessment training, EE is efforts of employee job performance The model is stated thus; $SA = f(EE)$

Therefore, $SA1 = a_0 + a_1EE + \mu \quad 6$

H3: There is a significant relationship between skill assessment training and the efforts of employee job performance

DISCUSSIONS

Table 1 shows the result of career counseling on worker efficiency in a private university. The coefficient of the constant term is - 413 and its associated t-value is statistically significant at a 5% level. This implies that at zero level of worker efficiency in the Private University, holding career counseling constant, the level of worker efficiency will decrease by 4%. The regression coefficient of career counseling carries a negative sign and

its associated t-value is significant at a 5% level of significance. The implication of the aforementioned is that worker efficiency in the manufacturing firm has a significant effect on the career development in their operations; a unit increase in the level of career development will lead to an increase in worker efficiency. Since the Prob. of t-statistics (0.000) is less than a 5% level of significance, ($0.000 < 0.05$) the study rejects the null hypothesis (H_0), as a result, the alternate hypothesis (H_a) which says that there is a significant relationship between career counseling and worker efficiency was accepted.

Table 2 shows the result of the coefficient determination (r^2) on career counseling on worker efficiency as 0.736. This implies that 73% of the total variation in worker efficiency is accounted for, by the level of career counseling. The R is 0.858. This means there is a strong relationship between career counseling and worker efficiency in UNTAG Semarang.

Table 3 shows the correlation coefficient between career counseling and worker efficiency. The R is 0.858. The aforementioned result shows that there is a strong relationship between career counseling and worker efficiency in UNTAG Semarang.

Table 4 shows the result of career mentoring on the quality of employee job performance. The coefficient of the constant term is -325 and its associated t-value is statistically significant at a 5% level. This, however, implies that at zero level of performance, in their operations, career mentoring constant, the level of the quality of employee job performance, will decrease by 3%. In other words, the coefficient of the regression result on career mentoring equally has a negative sign. This implies that career mentoring has a significant effect on the quality of employee job performance in UNTAG Semarang. Therefore, Since the Prob. of t-statistics (0.000) is less than a 5% level of significance, ($0.000 < 0.05$) the study reject the null hypothesis (H_0), as a result, the alternate hypothesis (H_a) was accepted, and hence, There is a significant relationship between career mentoring and quality of employee job performance in UNTAG Semarang.

More so, Table 5 shows the regression result on the coefficient of determination (r^2) on career mentoring on the quality of employee job performance. $R^2 = 0.582$. This implies that 58% of the total variation in the quality of employee job performance is accounted for, by career mentoring, in UNTAG Semarang. $R = 0.763$. This suggests a positive relationship

between career mentoring and the quality of employee job performance in UNTAG Semarang.

Table 6 shows the correlation coefficient between career mentoring and the quality of employee job performance in UNTAG Semarang. The R is 0.763. The aforementioned result shows that there is a positive relationship between career mentoring and the quality of employee job performance in UNTAG Semarang.

Table 7 shows the result of the skill assessment on the efforts of employee job performance. The coefficient of the constant term is -312 and its associated t-value is statistically significant at a 5% level. This, however, implies that at zero level of performance, in their operations, holding skill assessment constant, the level of the efforts of employee job performance will decrease by 3%. In other words, the coefficient of the regression result on skill assessment training equally has a negative sign. This implies that skill assessment training has a significant effect on the efforts of employee job performance in UNTAG Semarang. Therefore, Since the Prob. of t-statistics (0.000) is less than a 5% level of significance, ($0.000 < 0.05$) the study reject the null hypothesis (H_0), as a result, the alternate hypothesis (H_a) was accepted, and hence, There is a significant relationship between skill assessment training and the efforts of employee job performance in UNTAG Semarang.

Table 8 shows the regression result on the coefficient of determination (r^2) on skill assessment training on the efforts of employee job performance. $R^2 = 0.760$. This implies that 76% of the total variation in the efforts of employee job performance is accounted for, by skill assessment training in UNTAG Semarang. $R = 0.872$. This suggests a strong relationship between skill assessment training and the efforts of employee job performance in UNTAG Semarang.

Table 9 shows the correlation coefficient between skill assessment training and the efforts of employee job performance in UNTAG Semarang. The R is 0.872. The aforementioned result shows that there is a positive relationship between skill assessment training and the efforts of employee job performance in UNTAG Semarang.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings, the study concludes that private universities can increasingly improve employee job performance if considerable attention is given to career development in their organization. Organizations operate in a dynamic and complex environment characterized by the unpredictable economic climate, therefore, the ability of organizations to strategize today given the changing environment is driven by the level of employee operational capability, skills, and working dexterity acquired.

However, the result shows that worker efficiency has a significant effect on career counseling. Therefore, for improved work efficiency, organizations are encouraged to provide an institutional framework that can allow their employees to acquire practical skills and learning experiences through career counseling. Organizational performance could be attained through career mentoring programs because the result shows that the quality of employee job performance has a considerable effect on career mentoring. The quality of employee job performance can be sustained through career mentoring especially when the trained person provides guidance and advice used to complement learning on the job. The knowledge acquired through career mentoring has a propulsive effect on the quality of employee job performance. The result also revealed that skill assessment training has a significant effect on the efforts of employee job performance.

From the aforementioned, the study recommends that organizations should encourage and entrench career counseling activities as a leeway of providing a sustainable framework upon which employees' acquire the needed operational skills that will enhance their job performance in a typical organization. Also, considerable attention must be directed towards instituting career mentoring programs that have the capacity of educating the employees on the job for improved job performance in the organization. Finally, Management should initiate a periodic skill assessment training program for its employees. In doing this, the employees stand the chance of acquiring an additional skill that would make them proactive in their operations, and in meeting the demands of the environment.

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RESULTS

Data for this study were presented and analyzed based on the specific objective. The SPSS 17.0 package was used to regress the variables on the specific objectives of the study. For hypothesis one:

Table 1: Coefficients

Unstanddardized Coefficients			Standard coefficients		
Model	B	STD Error	Bets	t	Sig.
(Constant)	-413	.056		-8.268	.000
Cc	.517	.017	.648	34.852	.000

Dependent Variable: Worker Efficiency

Source: Analysis of Statistical data (SPSS 17.0)

Table 2: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of Estimates
	0.858	0.736	0.717	0.17173

Source: Analysis of Statistical data (SPSS 17.0)

Table 3: Correlations

		Cc	Worker Efficiency
Cc	Pearson Correlation	1	0.858
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	250	250
Worker Efficiency	Pearson Correlation	0.858	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	250	250

Source: Analysis of Statistical data (SPSS 17.0)

For Hypothesis Two

Table 4: Coefficients

Unstandardized Coefficients			Standard coefficients		
Model	B	STD Error	Bets	t	Sig.
(Constant)	- 325	.044		- 7.268	.000
Cm	.317	.023	.128	24.852	.000

Dependent Variable: Quality of Employee job performance

Source: Analysis of Statistical data (SPSS 17.0)

Table 5: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of Estimates
	0.763	0.582	0.573	0.23654

Source: Analysis of Statistical data (SPSS 17.0)

Table 6: Correlations

		Cm	Quality of Employee Job Performance
Cm	Pearson Correlation	1	0.763
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	250	250
Quality of Employee	Pearson Correlation	0.763	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
Job Performance	N	250	250

Source: Analysis of Statistical data (SPSS 17.0)

For Hypothesis Three

Table 7: Coefficients

Unstandardized Coefficients			Standard coefficients		
Model	B	STD Error	Bets	t	Sig.
(Constant)	- 312	.022		-3.216	.000
SA	.217	.014	.125	13.324	.000

Dependent Variable: Efforts of Employee job performance

Source: Analysis of Statistical data (SPSS 17.0)

Table 8: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of Estimates
	0.872	0.760	0.6723	0.2563

Source: Analysis of Statistical data (SPSS 17.0)

Table 9: Correlations

		SA	Efforts of Employee job Performance
SA	Pearson Correlation	1	0.872
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	250	250
Efforts of Employee job Performance	Pearson Correlation	0.872	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	250	250

Source: Analysis of Statistical data (SPSS 17.0)