



Faculty of Cognitive Sciences and Human Development

**CAREER DEVELOPMENT AMONG WOMEN IN POWER:
A CASE IN MALE-DOMINATED JOB**

Dayang Nursharida binti Abang Zakaria

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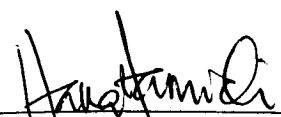
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**CAREER DEVELOPMENT AMONG WOMEN IN POWER: A CASE IN
MALE-DOMINATED JOB**

DAYANG NURSHARIDA BINTI ABANG ZAKARIA

**This project is submitted
in partial of requirement for a
Bachelor of Science with Honours
(Human Resources Development)**

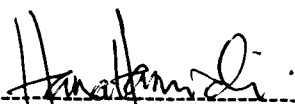
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(2019)

The project entitled 'Career Development among Women in Power: A Case in Male-Dominated Job' was prepared by Dayang Nursharida binti Abang Zakaria and submitted to the Faculty of Cognitive Sciences and Human Development in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a Bachelor of Science with Honours (Human Resources Development).

Received for examination by:



(DR HANA BINTI HAMIDI)

Date:

29th May 2019

Grade A

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to determine the career development among women in power who work in male dominated job. It focus on the challenges, competencies and coping strategies of women leader while navigating their career development. This study is done in qualitative approach and used semi-structured interview as data collection method. Three informants participated in this study. The findings then were analyzed using content analysis. Content analysis is used to identify specific themes as a result of an interview. The interviews were transcribed for data analysis purposes. Based on this study, all three specific objectives challenges, competencies and solutions have been identified. The main challenges are stereotype and bias at workplace. Besides, the main competencies identified is personal skill. Apart from that, the main coping strategies support from subordinate/team. The proposed solution method is seen to be able to contribute to those involved in the career planning of women in male-dominated job.

Keywords: career development, male-dominated job, women leader

ABSTRAK

Kajian ini bertujuan untuk mengenalpasti perkembangan kerjaya ketua wanita dalam dunia pekerjaan yang didominasi lelaki. Walaupun begitu, kajian ini mefokuskan aspek cabaran, kecekapan dan kaedah penyelesaian dalam perkembangan kerjaya ketua wanita. Kaedah kualitatif telah digunakan dalam kajian ini di mana temubual dijalankan secara separa berstruktur. Terdapat tiga orang informan yang terlibat dalam kajian ini. Dapatan kajian kemudian di analisis menggunakan kaedah analisis kandungan. Analisis kandungan digunakan untuk mengenal pasti tema-tema tertentu hasil daripada temu bual yang dijalankan. Maklumat yang diperoleh daripada temubual telah ditranskripkan untuk tujuan analisis data. Berdasarkan kajian ini, ketiga-ketiga fokus objektif iaitu cabaran, kecekapan dan kaedah penyelesaian berjaya di kenal pasti. Cabaran utama yang telah dikenalpasti adalah stereotaip dan bias. Seterusnya, kecekapan utama adalah kemahiran interpersonal manakala bagi kaedah penyelesaian utama yang berjaya dikenalpasti adalah sokongan daripada pekerja bawahan dan kumpulan. Kaedah penyelesaian yang dicadangkan dilihat mampu memberi sumbangan kepada pihak yang terlibat dalam perancangan kerjaya wanita dalam dunia pekerjaan lelaki.

Kata kunci: perkembangan kerjaya, pekerjaan dominasi lelaki, ketua wanita

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

1.0 Background of the study

In this recent year, most of the organization in industries realized the importance of having women employees in workforce. There has also been a district shift in terms of women moving into senior positions, and some into traditionally male-dominated jobs or male-dominated environments (England, 2010). As more women continue to move into the workplace, more companies are making a concerted effort to help women progress in their careers (Ledwaba, 2016).

Despite increased effort towards the advancement of women, the progress experienced by women still appears to be slower than that of men (Eagly & Carli, 2007). It is remain challenge for the organization to maintain women in male-dominated job because they tend not to stay long in this type of job (Du Plessis & Barkhuizen, 2012). Antoni (2013) stated that organizations that are wanted to encourage women to enter male-dominated occupations require information and consideration on increasing the numbers of female employees in these environments.

Franks, Schurink and Fourie (2007) conducted a qualitative research on life-role construction of career-orientated women and emphasized focusing on the need for more in-depth qualitative work on woman's experiences of their work-life roles. A qualitative approach to the experiences of women especially who work in male-dominated occupations, may contribute to the understanding women career and how they maintain their career motivation despite the challenges they experienced. This causes researcher to study on women employees that work in male-dominated job but focusing on those who was in power position in Sarawak.

1.1 Problem Statement

Over the past few decades, organizations and companies have seen an increasing number of women back into work. (Michailidis, Morphetuo & Theophylatuo, 2012). Most of the previous studies done in quantitative way focusing on women male-dominated occupations like engineering, banking, entrepreneurship and quantity surveying (Du Plessis & Barkhuizen, 2012).

There were several studies that have been carried out on women in organization; Koech (2003) studied the association of career development and job satisfaction in commercial banks in Nairobi while Kiboro (2008) studied factors that affect professional growth of women working in microfinance organizations and Gathecha (2016) studied challenges faced by female employees in career development.

However, none of them focusing on women leader in male-dominated job. Most of it is generally conducted among women employees only. With this study, the researcher aimed to explore the experiences as long as competencies and coping strategies they use to remain motivated and retain in their current job.

1.2 Research Objective

1.2.1 General Objective

The general objective of this research is to determine the career development among women employees with higher position in male-dominated job. This objective is to enhance understanding about challenges that occur among women in higher position in their career development.

1.2.2 Specific Objectives

1. To explain the challenges faced by women in power in male-dominated job in their career development.
2. To explore the competencies that women in power must have to excel in male-dominated job.
3. To identify the coping strategies that used to enable women in power to continue with their career paths.

1.3 Research Questions

1. What are the challenges faced by women in power in male-dominated job in their career development?
2. What are the competencies that women in power must have to excel in male-dominated job?
3. What are the coping strategies that enable women in power position to continue with their career paths?

1.4 Definition of Terms

1.4.1 Career Development

Conceptual Definition

According to Career Development Institute (2017), career development can be define as a unique and lifelong process for each individual of managing learning, work, and transitions in order to move forward and participate effectively in work and society.

Operational Definition

For this research, career development is employees' plan for the path of their job in upcoming the 5-10 years from now.

1.4.2 Challenges

Conceptual Definition

Challenges are something that tests the individual strength, skill and ability in doing activity. (Muhammad, 2012).

Operational Definition

In the context of this research, challenges mean obstacles faced by women in power position working in male-dominated job.

1.4.3 Women

Conceptual Definition

Women can be defined as a rival to men and also can be indicated as adult female who possesses feminine identity that shows her trait (Asri, 2009).

Operational Definition

In this research, women refer to female employees that work in the selected organization. Women employees in power position will be the informants for this research that will explain on the challenges on their career development.

1.4.4 Power Position

Conceptual Definition

Power refer to the ability to influence others to believe, behave, or to value as those in power desire them to or to strengthen, validate, or confirm present beliefs, behaviors, or values. (K. Petress, 2013).

Operational Definition

In the context of this research, power position refers to the employees who involve in decision making in the organization.

1.4.5 Male-Dominated Job

Conceptual Definition

According to Greenfeld, Greiner and Wood (as cited in Ledwaba.M, 2015), men typically work in managerial, technical, professional and physically demanding jobs. Therefore, these jobs are viewed as male-dominated jobs.

Operational Definition

For this research, male-dominated job referred to job where men employees have the most power and influences in performing the task given.

1.5 Summary

In this chapter the researcher explained on how the study conducted and linked with research objectives that have been stated previously. Besides that, the researcher also provide the definition of related terms for this study to enhance understanding on the study in the upcoming chapter.

CHAPTER 2

Literature Review

2.0 Introduction

This chapter provides a summary of the literature review done by past researchers. The literature review from various scholars will cover on the subject of discussion on findings of previous research. Plus, researcher also discuss on the theories related on the study.

2.1 Theory related to Women Career Development

Kaleidoscope Career Model (KCM)

KCM is a new model of careers developed by Mainiero and Sullivan (2005). Both of them suggest that “Like a kaleidoscope that produces changing patterns when the tube is rotated and its glass chips fall into new arrangements, women shift the pattern of their careers by rotating different aspects of their lives to arrange roles and relationships in new ways”. In this model they provide three parameters which are authenticity, balance and challenge. All the parameters are related to each other but have different levels of importance that fit between women’s life and career. These three parameters are called as the *ABCs of Kaleidoscope Careers*. Below are the tables that will explain on the parameters mention previously:

Authenticity	The being true to oneself in the midst of the constant interplay between personal development and work and non-work issues.
Balance	Making decisions so that the different aspects of one’s life, both work and non-work, form a coherent whole.
Challenge	Engaging in activities that permit the individual to demonstrate responsibility

control, and autonomy while learning and growing.

Table 1: ABCs of Kaleidoscope Model

To relate in this research, women employees need all the parameters to plan their career path especially those who work in male-dominated job. Plus, it can be used as guidance for them to retain in their current job.

2.2 Women in Male Dominated Job

According to England (2010), women choose to shifted into male-dominated job is because this occupation offer more income than female-dominated job. In the modern era, women especially those who already have their own family tend to choose job with more income (England, 2010). Hicks (2012) stated that salary inequities show gender inequality and discrimination that inhibit women's career progression. However, to enter male-dominated jobs, women must be skillful, educated and gain a lot of experiences in the related area (England, 2010).

One of the key barriers to women's advancement in corporate leadership is that women have limited, conflicting, and often unfavorable options to be a leader (Catalyst, 2007). This supported by Damaske (2011), women tend to move from their current job in male-dominated field to female-dominated job because of gender stereotyping and discrimination. The characteristics of managers tend to fit masculine stereotypes better than feminine (Powell, 2011). Men tend to have advantages with a better person-job fit because the arrangements within the organization are meet to their needs in particular (Benschop and Doorewaard, 2012). Most of the people around the world prefer men as managers, even though there are increasing number of in management ranks every industrialized country (Powell, 2011). Women tend to have their own stereotypical

gender role expectations where they questioned on women's competence and gender-role ideologies that will lead to low self-efficacy and low self-confidence (Damaske, 2011).

Antoni (2013) stated that most of the challenges faced by women to retain in male dominated job are due to the biased infrastructure, gender stereotype and lack of transformational from organization because of the majority in the organization are male employees. Organization structure and functions still did not fully support women career path in order to balance with their family responsibilities (Cha, 2013). There are several coping strategies for women in male-dominated job to retain in their job including mentorship, appreciation of feminine advantages and adoption of male characteristic in performing job. (Antoni, 2013)

2.3 Research Framework

This framework is built to guide researcher in path of this research. In this research, researcher wanted to relate the "past, present and future" that lead to women's career development. Researcher will seek information on past (experiences, knowledge and expertise) that help them to motivated the women employees retaining in male-dominated job. Next, researcher would like to know on present situation (competencies) that make them still in their job. The last one is to look for future career goals (coping strategies) that done by employees themselves and organization to retain women in male-dominated job.

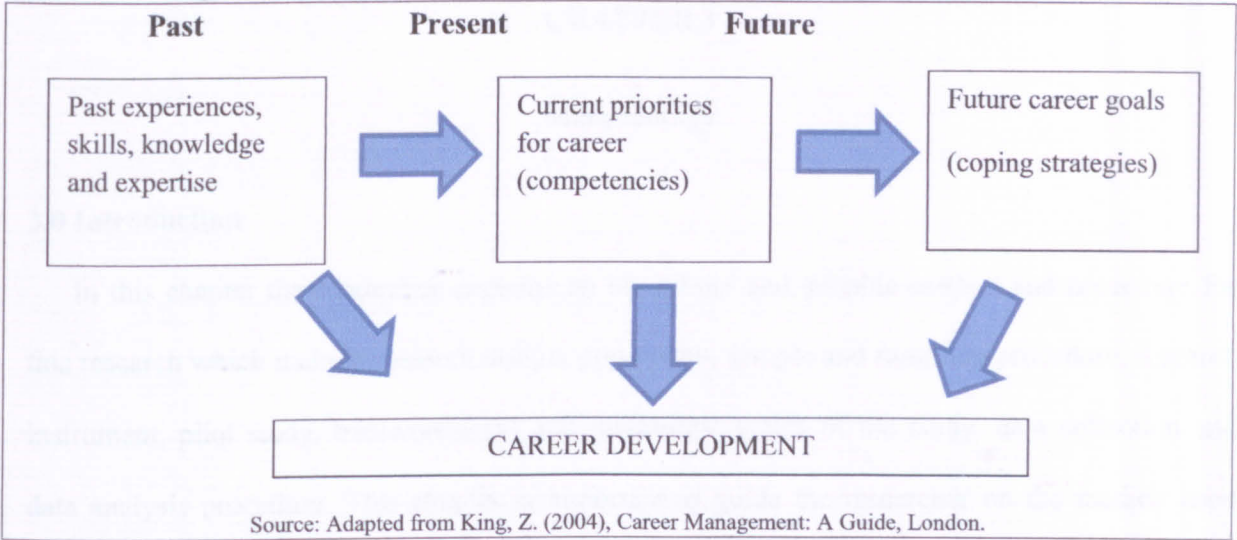


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of Women Career Development

2.4 Summary

This chapter explained about previous study that consist of theory related and past similar research. Through digging in depth the on previous study, researcher will gain more knowledge and understanding in the related field. Besides, the researcher also provides framework to give a view on what is this research all about.

CHAPTER 3

Methodology

3.0 Introduction

In this chapter the researcher explains on the proper and suitable method and procedure for this research which include research design, population, sample and sampling procedure, research instrument, pilot study, trustworthiness and credibility, ethics of the study, data collection and data analysis procedure. This chapter is important to guide the researcher on the method used before conducting research.

3.1 Research Design

The researcher chose qualitative approach for this research. Through qualitative approach, the researcher may get specific information from the broad field the research. Interview session were conducted with women in power position in selected organization.

3.1.1 Data Collection Technique

Semi-structure interviews

Researcher will use semi-structure interview out of three types of interview. According to Doyle (2017), semi-structure interview refer to interview that do not need to be very formal in term of question arrangement. The data for this research was analyzed using this method. However, before conducting this semi-structure interview, the researcher must prepare for the interview session which considering the research question because the research questions define the purposed of the study. Hence, researcher should prepare enough questions to ensure the information given meet the objectives of the study.

3.2 Population, Sample and Sampling Procedure

This research involves women employees which are selected from those who are currently in power position in the chosen organization. The selected informants should experience career in male-dominated job so that the information given was align with research objectives. This research used purposive and snowball sampling. This is because the informants will be selected according to population characteristic and research objectives.

3.3 Research Instrument

Semi-structured would be used by researcher as instrument to obtain the data. Besides, researcher also provides a form for the informants to fill in their background. The interview session that were conducted was face-to-face interview. However, before conducting the interview the researcher are responsible to ask the supervisor on the arrangement of the question. This is to make sure that the interview question was suitable for interview session.

This type of interview is more suitable because the interview question can be changed from time to time during the interview session the depending on the progress of the response from the informant. Besides, through this type of interview, researcher can dig more on informants' background, experiences and even opinion regarding career development among women in power position. Hence, the researcher needs to have skills to ask question so that so that interview sessions are not passive and the answers required for the study findings are in line with the stated objectives. During the interview session, researcher prepared a notebook, pen and also a voice recorder to record the voice of the informant.

3.4 Pilot Study

Pilot study is a pre-interview session that should be conducted before the real interview session. This is to ensure the trustworthiness and credibility of the research. Besides, the purpose of conducting pilot study is to ensure the questions are suitable and appropriate to ask during the real interview session. Hence, the informants also must be women employees that work in male dominated job in any sector. The benefit of conducting pilot study is researcher can do improvement in term of their skill to ask question and the arrangement of the question also. This made it easier during the real interview session later because it can be run smoothly without big mistake and obstacles.

3.5 Trustworthiness and Credibility

To relate on this, questions that created by the researcher were obtained from previous researcher that already studied in the related area. Before that, the researcher should consult the supervisor to check on the question and then make any necessary amendment for all the questions that will be asked. In this aspect, the supervisor checked all including suitability and sensitivity of the questions and grammatical error. This is to avoid any issue occur throughout the interview session later. After the supervisor approved the questions in concern of all the criteria, the researcher could start to create script for the interview.

Apart from that, to avoid false information given by the informants the researcher should alerted the informants to answer all the questions honestly according to their experiences. After done with the interview session, the researcher would read again all the information that have been collected and listen again to the recording that have been recorded. The purpose of doing this was to ensure the information was aligned with the written data. Next, the researcher should

translate all the information into the transcript and it is advised to ask the informants whether they are satisfied with the information that stated in the transcript.

3.6 Ethics of the Study

Before conducting any interview session with the organization, the researcher should provide a letter of permission to ensure that the selected organization is aware on the interview that will be conducted with the women employees in their organization. In addition, the researcher also should apply for approval from the informants if they are willing to involve in the interview session. Next, the researcher should do an appointment to decide the suitable time and date for conducting the interview. This is to respect their working hours with sudden come and without doing any consent.

Researcher should make an agreement with the informants before real interview session begin. Researcher is responsible to explain on the details of interview including the information given by the informants will be recorded only for academic purposes. Besides, in this situation the informants have their right to refuse to be recorded and not to answer any sensitive question according to their views. However, researcher should understand and accept their decision without forcing the informants to do what they refused to.

3.7 Data Collection Procedure

The first step is to look for informants, which are women employees in power position that work in male-dominated job. The suitable method to look for the informants is by using purposive sampling. By using this method, the informants would be selected through their characteristics of objective of this study. After the researcher manage to get the informants