

## Career Success, Career Commitment and Organizational Support: Empirical Evidence from the Banking Sector

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### Abstract

*Career success plays a significant role in the progress of any employee's career. The current study attempted to investigate how organizational support and career commitment can influence career success. Through using the quantitative approach, data were collected from 415 employees in the Islamic banking sector of Bahrain. The structural equation modeling results using Smart PLS 2.0 reported a significant relationship between organizational support and career success. Accordingly, the study also reported a significant correlation between career commitment and career success. The findings highlight how career success is essential, and the role of organizational support and career commitment towards harnessing it. The paper presents implications for theory and practice, followed by the scope for future studies.*

**Key-words:** Career Success, Career Commitment, Organization Support.

### 1. Introduction

In recent years, career success has attracted scholarly attention. Marshall et al. (2018) stated that career success is the most crucial prospect of an individual's life. Today, the business world is dynamically growing with accelerated economic and structural changes. These developments make the business environment less predictable for career success and patterns. In connection with employee relationships, flexible and objective planning, one's career is essential (Sullivan &

Baruch, 2009). Typically, employees are always looking for career success. However, past studies (Arthur, Khapova, & Wilderom, 2005; Heslin, 2005; Haenggli & Hirschi, 2020; Sherif & Nan, 2019), have indicated that employees face several challenges in career success in the respective organizations, due to elements of job insecurity, lack of support. (Converse et al., 2012). Abele (2014) stated that employees are not satisfied with career progression and organizational plans. Evidence by Santos (2016) and Blokker et al. (2019) explained that career success is a prevalent issue across the majority of organizations. Nevertheless, the researchers in this domain have failed to outline how individual and organizational factors can help boost career success.

More importantly, limited studies have investigated such factors in the Arab region as scholars have remained more enthusiastic investigating this issue across western economies (e.g., Santos, 2016; Blokker et al., 2019; Haenggli & Hirschi, 2020; Sherif & Nan, 2019; Guo et al., 2019), thus demanding more empirical attention.

Present literature underlines limited evidence about career success in Bahrain, and here we attempt to address these gaps and investigate this issue. In particular, what factors influence career success is also less known and empirically tested. Thus, the present study examines the relationship between organizational support and career commitment to career success. In the views of Chen (2011), providing organizational support followed by the commitment to career from an individual can be a perfect match to boost career success, which later results in several outcomes such as performance and profitability. Additionally, Choo et al. (2009) reported that career success enhances employee commitment, whereby prominent researches have linked it with employee commitment and satisfaction (Alzyoud et al., 2019; Chen, 2011; Barnett & Bradley, 2007). These studies have indicated that career satisfaction is the best approach to get the best out of employees.

## **2. Problem Statement**

It is a fact that every working individual aspires to succeed in his or her career (Rowley et al., 2016). However, what can ideally help individuals accomplish this is a question that requires further research. Prior studies were conducted across various demographics and have underlined numerous factors that could boost career success (e.g., Hirschi et al., 2018; Walsh et al., 2018). Based on these studies, these factors could be organizational and individual and can play an instrumental role in harnessing individual careers and success.

However, regardless of the prominence of career success towards promising results for organizational outcomes, less is known about its prediction in the region apart from the few western

economies (Santos, 2016; Blokker et al., 2019; Haenggli & Hirschi, 2020; Sherif & Nan, 2019; Guo et al., 2019). Hence, what could potentially predict career success is unknown empirically and has not been tested in emerging economies such as Bahrain.

### 3. Research Objectives

There is a significant issue demanding thorough attention to enrich this research area, and minimal research exists on studying the relationship between organizational support, career commitment, and career success. Therefore, in a globally competitive environment, it becomes vital to address this issue of employees' career success through these factors. Thus, The current study aims to address the need for giving empirical evidence on this relationship in a sample from the Arab organizations' culture, particularly in Bahrain.

### 4. Research Questions, Hypotheses, and Conceptual Framework

The study's core aim is to examine the predictors of career success and achieve this aim. The current study forwards the following objectives:

RO1. Can organizational support be of any importance in furthering career success?

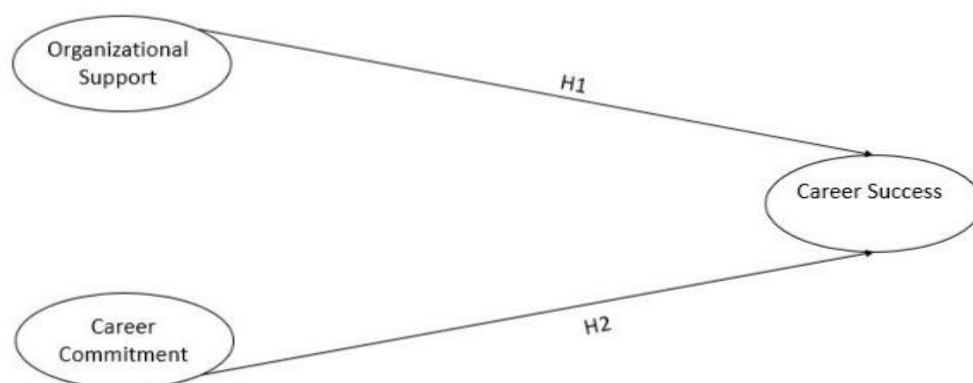
RO2. Can career commitment play a notable role in enhancing career success?

Therefore, this research will test the following hypotheses:

H1: There will be a positive relationship between organizational support and career success

H2: There will be a positive relationship between organizational commitment and career success

Fig. 1 - Conceptual Model



## **5. Literature Review**

### **5.1 Career Success**

Career success is the outcome of an individual's career experience. Conventionally, it refers to physical and upward career mobility, often accompanied by notable positions, prestige, and financial rewards (Kraimer & Astrove, 2015; Sullivan et al., 1998). Career success in specific is defined as individual work experiences over a particular time. Arthur et al. (2005) asserted that the expression of time is essential to consider for career success. According to Hogan, Chamorro, Premuzic, and Kaiser (2013), a person needs to participate and engage in some work aspects to gain consideration for career success. When individuals achieve success and recognition at work later brings noteworthy outcomes for organizations in the shape of responsive achievement of their organizational goals (Sulaiman et al., 2014).

Typically, any progress in horizontal aspects may also be considered career success (Arthur et al., 2005), as it depends and varies from one occupation to another. On the premise of these explanations, Chen (2011) defines career success as the outcome of an individual's long term experiences and objectives. The author suggests that an employee must have a career whereby he/she has spent considerable time performing a particular work in a specific direction. However, career shifts and other success factors may also be considered accordingly (Heslin, 2005; Gunz & Heslin, 2005; McCarthy, 2015). Based on this, it could also be understood that work prospects play a crucial role, and without them, career success appears to be impossible. Not only this, but studies also suggest that individuals require to be satisfied with the career prospects as well to experience success in a career (Ng & Feldman, 2014; Chen, 2011).

### **5.2. Organization Support and Career Success**

Organizational support is considered as an essential component (Mughal, 2019) and is also seen vital when it comes to career success. Results from a recent study have underlined that employees who perceive higher organizational support tend to experience higher career success. Since there are cooperation and support from the organizations toward individual employees, it leads towards individuals perceiving higher career success (Chen, 2011; 2010). In the views of Lui et al. (2015), organizational support helps employees develop and grow further in their careers, strengthening their loyalty with the workplace. A study by Chen (2011) on employees in China underlined that organizational support could notably influence career success. Based on these

arguments, it can be said that organizational support can positively impact career success and thereby can help businesses enhance employee behaviors and outcomes in the long run.

Previous research such as Chen (2010) and Eisenberger (1990) denote organizational support as the level and measure to which employees believe that their organization recognizes, supports, and facilitates their efforts. These studies have also highlighted a positive and robust association between career success and organizational support from the past two decades. In the views of Tremblay, Dahan, and Gianecchini (2014), support within an organization can foster career success. Culié, Khapova, and Arthur (2014) have found that motivated and committed employees are often the ones who are highly supportive of work.

A meta-analysis conducted by Riggle et al. (2009), regarding organizational support upon numerous personnel outcomes found that career success was strongly related to organizational support. The results suggest that organizational support could lead to higher career success. Thus we tested the following:

### **5.3. Career Commitment and Career Success**

Career commitment denotes "the strength of one's motivation to work in a chosen career role" (Hall, 1971). Changing work environments and the pace of careers in organizations have led employees to exhibit more commitment to their careers and perhaps less or conditional commitment to their organizations (Noordin et al., 2002). Career commitment reflects a form of work commitment that the employees have towards their careers and could be related to desired career outcomes.

Furthermore, a study conducted on the link between organizational commitment and its relationship with different work outcomes was found amongst individuals who rated themselves high in career commitment. Similarly, Tzeng and Chen (2012) and Day and Allen (2004) found a career commitment to be significantly associated with career success. Career commitment reflects a specific type of employee commitment to work, which may also be connected to specific career outcomes. Employees with higher levels of career commitments and success features remain more inclined towards investing in boosting their careers so that they could get the maximum benefits in the long run (Jiang et al., 2014). Accordingly, Srikanth and Israel (2012) have outlined that commitment has a positive and significant relationship with career success. Further, Vandenberghe and Basak (2013) concluded that employees committed with their organization are mainly focused on their long-term careers with the organization. Hence, we are confident of finding a strong positive association between career commitment and career success.

The importance of individual perception of organizational support, career commitment, and career success appears to be conducted on a serious note to establish a robust understanding about these links (Cao, Hirschi, & Deller, 2014; Othman et al., 2012; Riggle et al., 2009; Chen, 2011). The current study investigates these relationships to forward robust results to boost career success. A critical review of the literature pushes towards the feature of establishing the following framework whereby, the current study attempts to investigate questions and objectives about the link and role of organizational support and career commitment towards predicting career success.

## **6. Research Methodology**

### **6.1. Measurement and Instrumentation**

This current study examines the relationship between organizational support, career commitment, and career success. The study adapted three instruments from different studies. In the present study, participants were asked about career success by deploying a 9-item scale (Seibert & Kraimer, 2001; Greenhaus et al., 1990). Accordingly, for organizational support, the study adopted a 7-item scale from Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002) and a 7-item scale for career commitment measure from Blau (1988) work.

### **6.2. Population and Sample**

The study adopted a simple random sampling technique to generalize the findings of the present study. (Olken & Rotem, 1986). The target population was non-managerial employees across the major Islamic banks in Bahrain. Banks have remained a major attraction of empirical studies in the recent past (e.g., AlZgool et al., 2020; Shaikh, 2019). Notably, in a scholarly work, it is vital to select the sample which best represents the population. From distribution, 235 questionnaires were obtained out of 300. Only 207 questionnaires were used for data analysis after discarding incomplete questionnaires.

### **6.4. Data Analysis and Interpretation**

Structural equation modeling using Smart PLS 2.0 was used in the current study. This study used SmartPLS-SEM for data analysis software (Ringle et al., 2005). Prominent studies in social

sciences in the recent past have used Smart PLS in their studies (e.g., Ahmed, Mozammel & Ahmed, 2018; Ahmed, Abdul Majid & Mohd Zin, 2016; Lee et al., 2019).

## **7. Results**

### **7.1. Demographic Profile of the Respondents**

Demographics of the respondents indicated 83.7% male and remaining female. In terms of marital status, 52 percent reported as married and 48 percent as unmarried. In connection to age, 61.1 percent of the respondents reported aging between 20 to 30 years, and 26.8 percent between 30 to 40 years. Accordingly, 10.7 percent reported aging between 40 and 50 years and 1.3 percent between 50 and 60 years.

### **7.2. Assessment of PLS-SEM Path Model Results**

The present study adopted a two-step process to evaluate the hypothesized relationships using PLS-SEM, as suggested by Henseler, Ringle, and Sinkovics (2009). This two-step process comprises the assessment of the measurement model first, and second, the structural model's assessment.

### **7.3. Measurement Model Assessment**

This stage involves investigating the psychometric properties of the conceptualized framework and its constructs through determining individual item reliability, internal consistency reliability, and discriminant validity (Hair et al., 2014; Hair et al., 2011; Henseler et al., 2009).

Table 1 outlines that individual item reliability was examined through assessing item loadings keeping in view the 0.50 threshold as suggested by Hair et al., (2014). Accordingly, the average variance extracted scores for each of the constructs was also, confirmed with a threshold of 0.50, following the recommendations of Hair et al. (2014). Furthermore, composite reliability coefficients were assessed with a cut off of 0.70 and above. Results in Table 2 above conclude with the attainment of all the thresholds, thus confirming the psychometric properties of the conceptual framework.

Table 1 - Loadings, AVE, CR and R-square

Construct	Items	Loadings	AVE	CR	R-square
<b>Career Commitment</b>			0.626461	0.921	
	CC1	0.669			
	CC2	0.810			
	CC3	0.833			
	CC4	0.836			
	CC5	0.775			
	CC6	0.768			
	CC7	0.836			
<b>Career Success</b>			0.788059	0.973	0.453
	CS1	0.865			
	CS2	0.954			
	CS3	0.494			
	CS4	0.923			
	CS5	0.855			
	CS5	0.939			
	CS6	0.942			
	CS7	0.943			
	CS8	0.953			
	CS9	0.911			
<b>Organizational Support</b>			0.594	0.911	
	OS1	0.7911			
	OS2	0.6608			
	OS3	0.7755			
	OS4	0.8408			
	OS5	0.7756			
	OS6	0.7493			
	OS7	0.7889			

#### 7.4. Discriminant Validity

Discriminant validity refers to the extent to which a particular latent construct is different from other latent constructs (Duarte & Raposo, 2010). In the present study, discriminant validity was examined by examining the square roots of AVE scores, as recommended by Fornell and Larcker (1981). Results of the square root in the correlation table outline that the square root values resulted higher than the corresponding values for each of the latent constructs.

Table 2 - Discriminant Validity

Latent Variable Correlations	1	2	3
<b>Career success</b>	<b>0.799522</b>		
<b>Career organization support</b>	0.483833	<b>0.851564</b>	
<b>Career commitment</b>	0.749089	0.728918	<b>0.896881</b>



## 7.5. Structural Model Assessment

Results of the structural model pertaining to the assessment of the significance of the path coefficients on Table 3 confirm a significant relationship between organizational support and career success ( $\beta = 0.210$ ,  $t = 3.335$ ). Accordingly, career commitment and career success also reported significant relationship ( $\beta = 0.429$ ,  $t = 6.267$ ).

Table 3 - Hypothesis and Results

Hypothesis	Relationship	Beta	Standard Error	t-value	Decision
Organization support and Career Success	OC -> CS	0.210	0.087	3.335	Supported
Career commitment and Career Success	CC -> CS	0.429	0.068	6.267	Supported

## 8. Discussion and Conclusion

The study's main contribution was to determine the strength of the relationship between organizational support, career commitment, and career success in the Islamic banking sector of Bahrain. The results confirmed the hypothesized relationships hence confirming the acute impact of organizational support and career commitment towards harnessing career success. The results have addressed the contextual gaps while confirming the empirical assertions of past studies. The findings have underlined that bank employees in Bahrain perceived organizational support to be instrumental in furthering their career success. Similarly, the findings also outline that career commitment is vital to boost career success.

Furthermore, the findings educate, that when organizational support is high, (whereby a suitable work atmosphere is provided with full facilitation and support), it can enhance their career success in the Islamic banking sector. Notably, between the two, career commitment has resulted in being more significant in furthering their career success. Hence, this indicates that besides organizational support for career development and progression, it is crucial that the individuals themselves are also motivated and committed towards their careers. Overall, the results extend our understanding of organizational support (Riggle et al., 2009), and career commitment (Carson et al., 1999; Chen, 2011; 2010) relationship with career success in the Islamic banking sector of Bahrain.

Importantly, career commitment is likely to take on added relevance for practitioners. Under the altered psychological employment contract, employees are expected to increasingly adopt protean careers in which the focus is on personal development and employability rather than just working for

job security and progression in an organization. Therein, practitioners need to gain a better understanding of what determines career commitment. In the current study, we found organizational support and career commitment to be notable for career success. Therefore, the combination of organizational support and career commitment could be of value to foster career success. The aspect of career success in the current study suggests individual employees take responsibility for their career advancements and success. These Islamic bankers may also strive to engage their respective organizations to obtain maximum support in this regard. If the bank employees do not have any career ambition, the banks may not express any interest in working on any prospects. The findings outline that Islamic banks should work on facilitating the career goals of employees by providing necessary support and assistance. Policymakers have a significant role in establishing clear support and assistance routes for career success and progression for all employees.

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