RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CAREER COMPETENCIES AND CAREER SUCCESS IN A BOUNDARYLESS CAREER

CHAN YEW HUN

Research report in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of Online MBA

2009

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my beloved family members for their sacrifices and unconditional

support.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

First and foremost, special thanks to my supervisor Mr. Quah Chun Hoo for being very understanding and supportive. He has given me valuable comments, suggestions, guidance and advice throughout the course of my thesis preparation. Without his tireless support, I would not have learnt so much. Truly, it is an honor to have him as my supervisor.

I also wish to record my deepest gratitude to my family members, my bosses, colleagues, and friends for their understanding, moral support and encouragement given throughout my study.

Last but not least, many thanks to the respondents of this research for their willingness and contribution towards the success of this research.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 3:   METHODOLOGY

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

ix

ABSTRAK

x

Kajian ini bertujuan untuk menentukan peramal kejayaan dalam era kerjaya 'tanpa sempadan' dengan menggunakan tiga kelas kompetansi kerjaya iaitu: 'mengetahui mengapa', 'mengetahui siapa', and 'mengetahui bagaimana'. Tiga kriteria kejayan kerjaya telah dikaji, iaitu kerjayaan kerjaya tertanggap, pemasaran dalaman tertanggap, and pemasaran luaran tertanggap. Responden dalam kajian ini adalah graduan dan pelajar MBA USM yang terdiri daripada 41 orang lelaki and 77 orang perempuan. Kajian ini telah menggunakan analisis regresi pelbagai untuk menguji korelasi antara peramal-peramal dengan pelbagai perspektif kejayaan kerjaya.

Keputusan kajian ini menunjukkan kompetansi kerjaya 'mengetahui mengapa', 'mengetahui siapa', dan 'mengetahui bagaimana' membawa kepada kejayaan kerjaya. Bagi 'mengetahui mengapa', kajian ini menujukkan pendalaman kerjaya mempunyai hubungan positif dan signifikan dengan pemasaran luaran tertanggap. Peramal lain, keperibadian proaktif menpunyai hubungan positif dan signifikan dengan pemasaran dalaman tertanggap. Bagi 'mengetahui siapa', hanya satu perhubungan signifikan dijumpai, iaitu rangkaian dalaman yang mempunyai hubungan positif dengan pemasaran dalaman tertanggap. Disamping itu, kajian in juga menunjukkan identiti kerjaya mempunyai hubungan positif dan signifikan dengan ketiga-tiga kriteria kejayaan.

Akhir sekali, implikasi teoritikal, implikasi praktikal, dan hala tujuan kajian masa depan juga dibentangkan.

ABSTRACT

This research seeks to identify predictors of success in the boundaryless career using the three classes of career competencies: 'knowing why', 'knowing whom', and 'knowing how'. Three criteria of career success were examined: perceived career success, perceived internal marketability, and perceived external marketability. Participants in this study were the MBA graduates and students of USM. They consisted of 41 males and 77 females. This study used multiple regression analysis to test the correlation between the predictors and the multiple perspective of career success.

The result of this study indicates that 'knowing why', 'knowing whom', and 'knowing how' career competencies partially lead to career success. For 'knowing why', the study showed that career insight is positively and significantly related to perceived external marketability. Another predictor, namely proactive personality is positively and significantly related to perceived internal marketability. On the other hand, for 'knowing whom', the only significant relationship found is internal networks where it positively relates to perceived internal marketability. Besides, the study also shows that career identity is positively and significantly related to all three criteria of success.

Lastly, theoretical implication, practical implication, and directions for future research are presented.

<div align="center">

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

</div>

1.0 Introduction

This chapter introduces the research outline of the study. The chapter illustrates the background, problem statement, research objectives, research questions, definition of key terms and significance of the study.

1.1 Background of the study

Careers were traditionally thought to evolve within the context of one or two firms and were conceptualized to progress in linear career stages (Sullivan, 1999). Eby (2003) also stated that organizational careers have been traditionally conceptualized as linear trajectories where individuals advance hierarchically within a single organization over the course of their career. Before that, Schein (1978) has discussed hierarchical advancement and specialization in the idea of radial and vertical career paths. Likewise, Driver (1982) discussed 'steady state' and 'linear' careers marked by a common work role for life and upward mobility.

Recently, many firms have restructured to become more flexible in response to environmental factors such as rapid technological advancements (Howard, 1995) and increased global competition (Sullivan, 1999). Eby (2003) discussed that individuals can no longer expect lifetime employment within one organization or a steady climb up the corporate ladder in the volatile and unstable organizational environment. The tall, multi-layered, functionally organized structures characteristic of many large companies have changed.

Individuals are experiencing involuntary job loss, lateral job movement both within and across organizational boundaries, and career interruptions (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996b; Sullivan, Carden, & Martin, 1998; Sullivan, 1999; Eby & DeMatteo, 2000). This has led to an emerging paradigm to study organizational careers: the notion of the boundaryless career (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996a).

DeFillippi & Arthur (1994) has defined boundaryless career as "...a sequence of job opportunities that go beyond the boundaries of a single employment setting". This perspective emphasizes that careers are no longer characterized by a single form but can take a range of forms that defies traditional employment assumptions' (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996b). Sullivan (1999) also defined that boundaryless careers as occupational paths that are not bounded within specific organizations but grow through project-based competency development across firms in an industry network.

Boundaryless career "does not characterize any single career form. It is rather in a range of possible forms that defies traditional employment assumptions". A hallmark of the boundaryless career is that it is not bounded to a single organization. Rather, it transcends organizational memberships and consists of sequences of experiences across both organizations and jobs (Eby, Butts, & Lockwood, 2003). Some other hallmarks of a boundaryless career include: portable skills, knowledge, and abilities across multiple firms (Bird, 1996); personal identification with meaningful work (Mirvis & Hall, 1996); the development of multiple networks and peer learning relationships (Raider & Burt, 1996); and individual responsibility for career management (Sullivan, 1999)

1.2   Research Problem

While the idea of the boundaryless career has garnered substantial interest, not much empirical research has been carried out. As such, a research to examine the predictors of success in the boundaryless career was carried out (Eby, Butts, & Lockwood, 2003). Using data from 458 alumni from a large southeastern university, predictions were tested using partial correlations and dominance analysis (Eby, Butts, & Lockwood, 2003). The research used a tripartite operationalization of career success that included an indicator of psychological success, perceived marketability within one's organization, and perceived marketability in the external marketplace. Three classes of career competencies proposed as important predictors of success in the boundaryless career are: perceived career success, perceived internal marketability, and perceived external marketability. The selection of predictors was guided by writings on the boundaryless career which stresses the importance of 'knowing why,' 'knowing whom,' and 'knowing how' (DeFillippi & Arthur, 1994; Arthur, Inkson, & Pringle, 1999; Jones & Lichtenstein, 2000; Parker & Arthur, 2000).

Whilst the above research has been carried out in western countries to determine the predictors of success in boundaryless career, little research has been conducted in Malaysia. Hence, this study hopes to shed some light as to whether the 3 predictors are related to career success. In addition, it hopes to add to the gap in the literature on this issue in the Malaysian context.

1.3   Research Objectives

The objective of this study is to identify the factors that are important for career success in a boundaryless career. This study also investigates the relative importance of these three classes of predictors in understanding career success.

Specifically, the study seeks to:

1) Examine the relationship between the 'knowing why' predictors and career success.

2) Examine the relationship between the 'knowing whom' predictors and career success.

3) Examine the relationship between the 'knowing how' predictors and career success.

1.4   Research Questions

The study tries to answer the following research questions:

1) What is the relationship between the 'knowing why' predictors and career success?

2) What is relationship between the 'knowing whom' predictors and career success?

3) What is the relationship between the 'knowing how' predictors and career success?

1.5   Significance of the Study

The expected outcomes of this study are:

1) To determine which of the three career competency variables is significantly related to career success in the Malaysian scenario.

2) The findings will add new insights to the issue and fill the gaps in the existing literature.

3) The findings may help working adults to figure out the key success factors for career advancement.

1.6   Definition of Key Terms

The major variables of this study are listed and defined in Table 1 below:

Table 1.1

Definition of Key Terms

Key Terms	Definition	Source
Boundaryless Career	Boundaryless careers are occupational paths that are not bounded within specific organizations	Bridges, 1994
Perceived Career Success	Psychological success that represents a feeling of pride and personal accomplishment that comes from knowing that one has done one's personal best'	Hall & Mirvis, 1996
Perceived Internal Marketability	Belief that one is valuable to his or her current employer.	Arthur & Rousseau, 1996b
Perceived External Marketability	Belief that one is valuable to other employers	Bird, 1994
Knowing Why	Career competency that relates to career motivation, personal meaning, and identification'	DeFillippi & Arthur, 1994
Knowing Whom	career-related networks and contacts	Arthur, 1999
Knowing How	career-relevant skills and job-related knowledge which accumulate over time and contribute to both the organization's and the individual's knowledge base	Arthur, 1999

1.7   Organization of Remaining Chapters

Chapter 2 reviews the work of previous researchers. The independent variables are: 'knowing why', 'knowing whom', and 'knowing how'; the dependent variable is career success and the criterion variables are: perceived career success, perceived internal marketability, and perceived external marketability which are discussed in greater depth. The hypothesized model is then depicted in theoretical model.

Chapter 3 describes the methodology deployed in conducting the research. The research design, instrument, method of data collection and data analysis are also be discussed

Chapter 4 presents the results and findings of the research.

Chapter 5 discusses the results and findings.   The limitations and suggestions for future research are also mentioned.

Chapter 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0   Introduction

For a better understanding of the present study, a comprehensive review of previous literature was carried out. The chapter begins by explaining the definition of boundaryless career and the criteria used to judge the career achievement. It then introduces the three classes of variables ('knowing why', 'knowing whom' and 'knowing how') referred to as career competencies, which should predict success. The chapter ends with a discussion of the theoretical framework and hypotheses development.

2.1   Career Success

Traditionally, success has been defined and measured by the number of promotions and increases in salary (Sullivan, 1999). In the boundaryless career the emphasis is on inter-firm mobility and unpredictability (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996b; Sullivan, Carden, & Martin, 1998). For example, in a review of 58 articles in five journals, Arthur and Rousseau (1996) found that 74% of the articles on careers assumed environmental stability, 76% had an intrafirm focus, and 81% had hierarchical assumptions. As such, it is suggested that scholars expand their conceptualizations of career success beyond those typically studied (e.g., promotions, salary) while simultaneously de-emphasizing external or objective measures of success (Parker & Arthur, 2000). Hall and colleagues (Hall & Mirvis, 1996; Mirvis & Hall, 1994, 1996) discussed the importance of psychological success as a criterion by which to judge career achievement. Arthur & Rousseau (1996), on the other hand discussed the individual marketability as an important criterion of career success.

2.1.1 Perceived Career Success

Perceived career success represents 'a feeling of pride and personal accomplishment that comes from knowing that one has done one's personal best' (Hall & Mirvis, 1996). The construct of perceived career success captures such feelings of satisfaction and accomplishment of one's career (Seibert, Crant, & Kramier, 1999) and is examined in the present study. Besides, Parker and Arthur (2000) discussed the 'intelligent subjective career', emphasizing that how one feels about his or her career accomplishments is more important than external or tangible indicators like salary growth.

2.1.2 Perceived Internal and External Marketability

Individual marketability is an important criterion of career success (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996b). Two different indicators of marketability of career success are developed: Internal marketability and external marketability. Internal marketability is defined as the extent that one is viewed as marketable within one's own company. External marketability is defined as the extent that one is marketable to organizations outside one's current job (Day, 2005).

Today, both employers and employees have lower expectations for long-term employment, employees are responsible for their own career development, and they are less committed to their organization than in the past (Mirvis & Hall, 1996; Cavanaugh & Noe, 1999). With jobs and career patterns being less long term and stable, individuals who are successful are those who are able to remain value-added to their present employer and are viewed as marketable by other organizations (Bird, 1994; Sullivan, et al., 1998). To stay viable, individuals need to concentrate on the factors that make them marketable. To sustain a competitive advantage,

firms desire individuals who can provide them with unique, value-added characteristics (Lyau & Pucel, 1995). Research by Lyau & Pucel (1995) found that highly marketable individuals fare well in times of job uncertainty. This suggests that perceived internal marketability (belief that one is valuable to his or her current employer) and perceived external marketability (belief that one is valuable to other employers) are two additional indicators of career success (Eby, Butts, & Lockwood, 2003).

2.2 Career Competencies

The boundaryless career hypothesis holds that careers are no longer constrained by organizational boundaries. People move freely between firms, relying on competencies that are transferable between companies (Gunz, Evans, and Jalland, 2000). Three variables constitute career competencies, namely 'knowing why', 'knowing whom', and 'knowing how'. Arthur (1994) had defined 'knowing why' as knowing why the work is important, 'knowing whom' as having a rich network of contacts, and 'knowing how' as how to do the work.

2.3 Knowing Why

'Knowing why' career competency is related to career motivation, personal meaning, and identification' (DeFillippi & Arthur, 1994). This competency is associated with an individual's motivational energy to understand oneself, explore different possibilities, and adapt to constantly changing work situations (Arthur, 1999). Parker & Arthur (2000) stated that 'knowing why' career competency is related to company culture, and incorporate individual values, motivation, and identification. The interplay between people's 'knowing why' competency and company culture will affect people's future career choices, adaptability, and

commitment. 'Knowing why' also allows individuals to decouple their identity with their employer and remain open to new possibilities and career experiences (Bridges, 1994; Mirvis & Hall, 1994; Arthur, 1999).

2.3.1 Career Insight

Career insight captures the extent to which one has knowledge of one's strengths and weaknesses, and specific career goals (Eby, Butts, & Lockwood, 2003). Career insight is the extent to which person has realistic perceptions of him or herself and the organization and relates these perceptions to career goals (London, 1983). According to London (1983), career identity is the degree to which individuals define themselves by their work and by the organization for which they work. It is positively related to goal clarity, social perceptiveness, self-objectivity, realism of expectations, career decision making, and future time orientation. Whereas, goal flexibility and need change should be negatively related to career insight. (London, 1983)

Individuals high on career identity are expected to enact careers where investments made in their company, occupation, industry, and social arena (e.g., friends, non-work activities) complement their professional goals (Arthur, 1999). Such investments should in turn enhance one's perception of career success and marketability, both inside and outside the organization.

2.3.2 Proactive Personality

The recent evolution of the career into a dynamic, boundaryless entity has compelled individuals to take proactive stances concerning the management of their careers and commitment to their professions. Proactive personality refers to a dispositional tendency

toward proactive behavior. According to Bateman and Crant's (1993) formulation, people who are highly proactive identify opportunities and act on them, show initiative, and persevere until they bring about meaningful change. Proactive people are pathfinders. They change their organization's mission or find and solve problems. These characteristics should facilitate success in the boundaryless career due to the increased need to adjust to ever-changing work conditions, take personal responsibility for one's career, and build personal networks (Hall & Associates, 1996). They transform their organizations' missions, find and solve problems, and take it on themselves to have an impact on the world around them. Proactive behaviors such as engaging in career planning, learning new skills, seeking information and advice from others and networking are all purported to increase individuals' employability, reputation, and value in the marketplace (Claes & Ruiz-Quintanilla, 1998).

Proactive people are more actively involved in the world around them in professional activities and in voluntary, charity, and related activities. The professional activities could enhance their interpersonal networks and potentially their career. The voluntary, charity, and related activities could strive to improve communities and other's lives. High-proactive people would have more major achievements than low-proactive people (Bateman & Crant's, 1993). Less proactive people are passive and reactive; they tend to adapt to circumstances rather than change them (Seibert, Scott E., Crant, J. Michael, Kraimer, Maria L., 1999).

2.3.3   Openness to Experience

The personality characteristic of openness to experience is examined as a third 'knowing why' competency. Individuals high on this trait tend to be imaginative, curious, broad-minded, and active (Barrick & Mount, 1991). Individuals with openness to experience commonly

associated with this dimension include being imaginative, cultured, curious, original, broad-minded, intelligent, and artistically sensitive (Barrick & Mount, 1991).

Openness to experience will be a valid predictor of one of the performance criteria, and training proficiency. Training proficiency assesses personal characteristics such as curiosity, broadmindedness, cultured, and intelligence, which are attributes associated with positive attitudes toward learning experiences. Such individuals are more likely to be motivated to learn upon entry into the training program and, consequently, are more likely to benefit from the training which could lead to career success (Barrick & Mount, 1991).

Individuals who score high on openness to experience (e.g., intelligence, curiosity, broad-mindedness, and cultured) are more likely to have positive attitudes toward learning experiences in general (Barrick & Mount, 1991).

They also seek out new experiences and are willing to entertain new ideas (Costa & McCrae, 1992).With the reality of less stable employment and the need to constantly be on the lookout for ways to build new skill sets, it is expected that openness to experience will be important in predicting success in the boundaryless career (Eby, Butts, & Lockwood, 2003).

2.4   'Knowing Whom' Career Competencies

'Knowing whom' refers to career-related networks and contacts (DeFillippi & Arthur, 1994; Arthur, 1999), including relationships with others on behalf of the organization (e.g., suppliers, customers) and personal connections (e.g., professional and social acquaintances). 'Knowing whom' also provides access to new contacts and possible job opportunities (Arthur,

1994). The major benefits of 'knowing whom' are that they represent a resource for expertise, reputation development, and learning (Arthur, 1994; DeFillippi & Arthur, 1994; Parker & Arthur, 2000).

Parker and Arthur (2000) stated that 'knowing whom' career competencies are related to company networks. These include internal company contacts, suppliers, customers, and industries contacts. The result of investing in this career competency is the development of 'career communities, networks which provide venues for career support and personal development (Parker & Arthur, 2000). The interplay between 'knowing whom' career competencies and company networks will reflect people's pursuit of personal support, access to information, and reputation building in their career (Parker & Arthur, 2000).

2.4.1 Mentoring Relationship

Kram (1985) described a mentor as a more experienced adult who helps a younger individual learn to succeed in the adult working world, by providing support, guidance and counseling to the protégé. Mentoring relationships are important developmental experiences for individuals and valuable sources of learning (Kram, 1985). Having a mentor should improve an individual's marketability because mentors provide their protégés with visibility and connections to important individuals inside and outside the organization (Kram, 1985). Mentors can also provide access and visibility to protégés both directly, by exposing them to important people within and outside the organization, and indirectly, by providing challenging assignments, which facilitate additional contact networks (Kram, 1985). Moreover, the "mentor" generally provides high amounts of both career and psychosocial assistance (Kram, 1985).

Other researchers state that mentoring relationship is one in which a senior person working in the protégé's organization assists with the protégé's personal and professional development (Fagenson, 1989). In much of the mentoring research of the past three decades, researchers have conceptualized mentoring as the developmental assistance provided by a more senior individual within a protégé's organization-that is, a single dyadic relationship (Higgins & Kram, 2001). Mentoring relationship is one variable that consistently relates to career success (Allen, Eby, Poteet, Lentz & Lima, 2004). Mentors often present their protégés with challenging assignments and valuable learning opportunities. These experiences should lead to increased competence and greater marketability (Day, 2005).

2.4.2   Internal and External Networks

Networks within and outside the organization are the other two predictors of success. Careers researchers have continuously advised the use of networking as one method employees can use to stay successful in today's volatile times (Hall & Mirvis, 1996). It is predicted that both internal and external networking is important since it provides non-redundant sources of support (Raider & Burt, 1996).

Networking is defined as "individuals' attempts to develop and maintain relationships with others who have the potential to assist them with their work or career" (Forret & Dougherty, 2001). Networks are considered essential elements of success in the boundaryless career for several reasons. With less job security among today's workers, individuals need to be well connected within their company as well as look outside the organization for support and developmental assistance (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996a; DeFillippi & Arthur, 1996; Higgins &

Kram, 2001).

Networking inside and outside the organization can help individuals stay on top of new developments and approaches (Higgins & Kram, 2001). In Eby et al's (2003) study, both internal and external networkings are predicted to be related to internal and external marketability. A person's network is defined as the pattern of ties linking a defined set of individuals (Day, 2005).

2.5   'Knowing How' Career Competencies

'Knowing how' refers to career-relevant skills and job-related knowledge which accumulate over time and contribute to both the organization's and the individual's knowledge base (Arthur, 1999; Bird, 1996; DeFillippi & Arthur, 1996). Parker & Arthur (2000) state that 'knowing how' career competencies is related to overall know-how and reflect an individual's career-relevant skills and understanding. The interplay between 'knowing how' career competencies and company know-how will reflect people's attempts to expand or change their work arrangements, and to enhance their future career opportunities and employability (Parker & Arthur, 2000).

2.5.1   Career/Job-Related Skills

The thing that makes 'knowing how' unique from traditional discussions of human capital is the emphasis on developing a broad and flexible skill base which is transportable across organizational boundaries. The development of skills is enhanced when individuals are oriented toward continuous learning (DeFillippi &Arthur, 1996). In addition there is an emphasis on occupational learning rather than job related learning (DeFillippi & Arthur, 1996;

Gunz, Evans, & Jalland, 2000). These kinds of relating skills have been shown to have a direct effect on actual (Brown, 2001) and perceived employability (Eby et al., 2003).

A well-developed career management skill is an improved contribution to economic growth, through enhanced employability, productivity and education/work efficiencies (Gillie & Gillie Isenhour, 2003) Career management skills are the abilities required to proactively navigate the working world and successfully manage the career building process (Bridgstock, 2009).

Career building skills are the skills relating to finding and using information about careers, labour markets and the world of work and then locating, securing and maintaining work (Bridgstock, 2009). It includes: being familiar with one's industry, being able to effectively identify and choose the best opportunities for advancement, knowing how long to stay in a role, knowing how to effectively apply for and obtain work, and creating social capital by creating strategic personal and professional relationships.

2.5.2   Career Identity

According to London (1996), career insight is the realism and clarity of an individual's career goals. It reflects the 'directional component of career motivation' (Noe et al., 1990). Career identity is how central one's career is to one's identity. It consists of two subdomains: work involvement and desire for upward mobility. Individuals who are high on career identity are likely to find career satisfaction to be more important than satisfaction from other areas of life (London, 1996).

A construct which reflects this propensity to engage in skill-enhancing opportunities and

immersion in professional activities is career identity (Noe et al., 1990; London, 1993). Those high on career identity should spend time and energy developing skills and competencies which should increase his or her net worth both within and outside the organization (Arthur, 1999). This construct is unique from 'knowing why' in that the emphasis is on opportunity development in terms of job-related skills and professional development rather than self-awareness or a general willingness to try new things (Eby, Butts, & Lockwood, 2003).

2.6   Theoretical Framework

Based on the literature review, a framework to guide this study is developed, as shown in Figure 2.1 below.
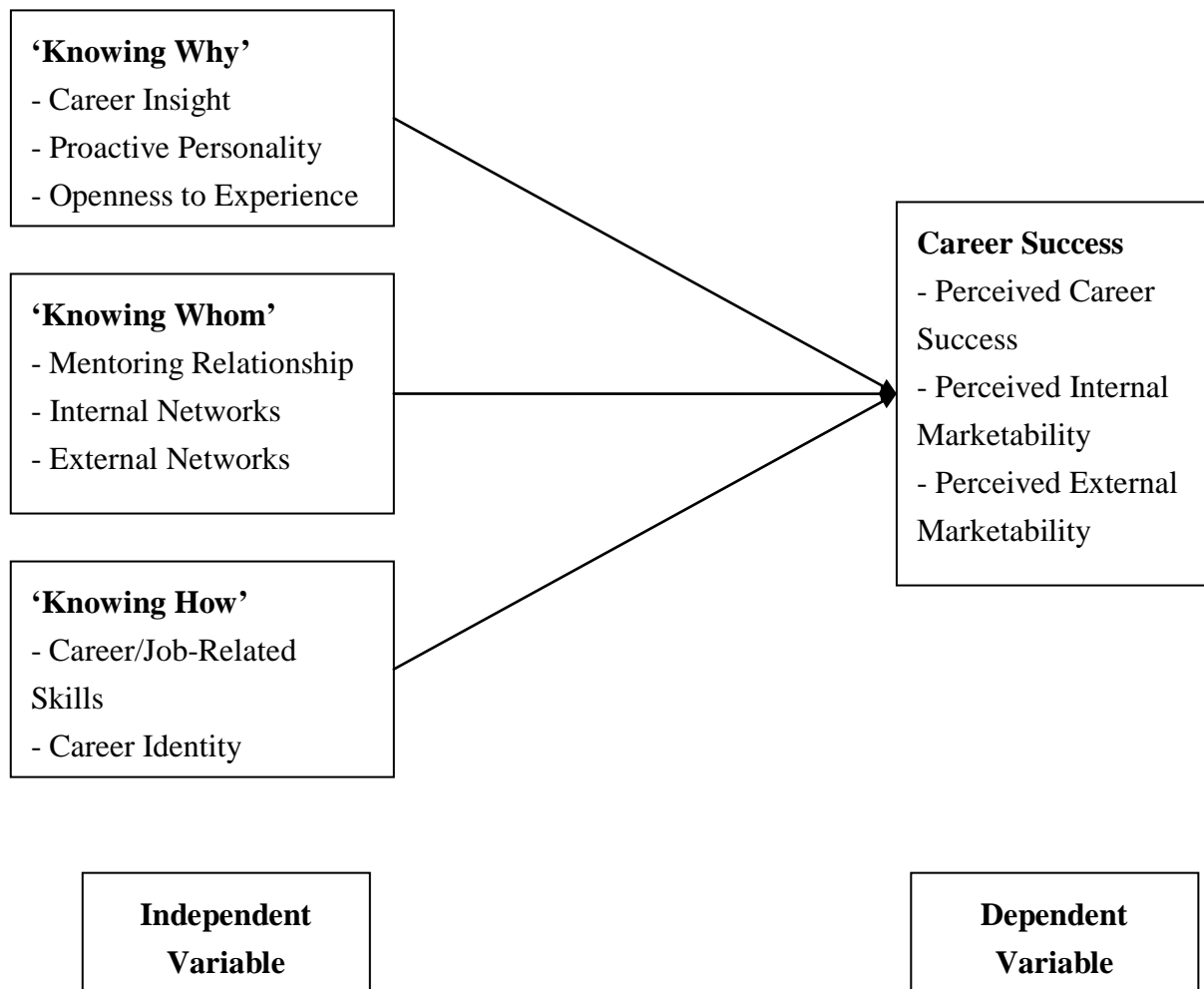
Career Competencies

Figure 2.1. Theoretical Framework

2.7   Hypothesis Development

The following hypotheses are derived based on the theoretical framework and literature review.

2.7.1   'Knowing Why' and Career Success

Three variables of 'knowing why' namely career insight, proactive personality, and openness to experience are measured as predictors of success in this study.

Career insight is the degree to which individuals define themselves by their work and by the organization (London, 1983). It captures to what extent individuals know their strengths, weaknesses, and interest, and also their career goals and plans (Eby, Butts, & Lockwood, 2003). Proactive personality refers to how individuals' are disposed towards the proactive behavior. These characteristics should facilitate success in the boundaryless career (Hall & Associates, 1996). Openness to experience refers to the individuals who tend to be imaginative, curious, broad-minded, and active (Barrick & Mount, 1991). Therefore, it is hypothesized that:

H1:   *The 'knowing why' predictors of proactive personality, openness to experience, and career insight will be positively related to perceived career success.*

H2:   *The 'knowing why' predictors of proactive personality, openness to experience, and career insight will be positively related to perceived internal marketability.*

H3:   *The 'knowing why' predictors of proactive personality, openness to experience, and career insight will be positively related to perceived external marketability.*

2.7.2   'Knowing Whom' and Career Success

Three variables of 'knowing whom' namely experience with a mentor, internal networks, and external networks serve as predictors of success in this study.

Experience with a mentor is an important developmental experience for individuals and valuable sources of learning (Kram, 1985). Networking inside and outside the organization can help individuals stay on top of new developments and approaches (Higgins & Kram, 2001). Thus, networks are considered essential elements of success in the boundaryless career. Therefore, the following hypotheses are formulated:

H4:   *The 'knowing whom' predictors of experience with a mentor, internal networks, and external networks will be positively related to perceived career success.*

H5:   *The 'knowing whom' predictors of experience with a mentor, internal networks, and external networks will be positively related to perceived internal marketability.*

H6:   *The 'knowing whom' predictors of experience with a mentor, internal networks, and external networks will be positively related to perceived external marketability.*

2.7.3   'Knowing How' and Career Success

Two variables of 'knowing how', namely career/job-related skills and career identity served as predictors of success in this study.

Individual with the 'knowing how' alertness would emphases on developing a broad and flexible skill base which is transportable across organizational boundaries (DeFillippi & Arthur, 1996). They always seek out training and development opportunities. According to

London (1986), career identity is the degree to which individuals define themselves by their work and by the organization for which they work. Those high on career identity should spend time and energy developing skills and competencies which should increase his or her net worth both within and outside the organization (Arthur, 1999). Thus, it is hypothesized that:

H7:   *The 'knowing how' predictors of career/job-related skills and career identity will be positively related to perceived career success.*

H8:   *The 'knowing how' predictors of career/job-related skills and career identity networks will be positively related to perceived internal marketability.*

H9:   *The 'knowing how' predictors of career/job-related skills and career identity will be positively related to perceived external marketability.*

2.8   Summary

A theoretical model is developed for this research based on the literature review. The next chapter will discuss the method employed for data collection and data analysis.

Chapter 3

METHODOLOGY

3.0   Introduction

This chapter elaborates on the methodological details of the study. It comprises research design, instruments, measurements, data collection and data analysis techniques.

3.1   Research Design

The main interest of this study is to determine the relationship between 'knowing why', 'knowing whom', 'knowing how', and criterion of success in a boundaryless career. This study is classified as a correlational research. In addition, hypothesis testing is undertaken to explain the variance in the dependent variables to predict individual career success. This research is an empirical study and used a scientific investigation which utilized the hypothetic-deductive method (Sekaran, 2006).

3.2   Unit of Analysis

The unit of analysis in this study consisted of MBA students and graduates from the School of Management, USM from 2003 to 2009.

3.3   Population and Sample

The population of this study consisted of the all MBA students and graduates of the School of Management, USM since 1992. A convenience sampling method was utilized.

3.4   Questionnaire Design

The questionnaire consisted of five different sections:

(i)   Section A: gathered information on the profile of the respondents.

(ii)   Section B: measured the criteria of success dimensions on 5-point Likert-type scale.

(iii)   Section C: measured the 'knowing why' predictor of success dimensions on 5-point Likert-type scale.

(iv)   Section D: measured the 'knowing whom' predictor of success dimensions on 5-point Likert-type scale.

(v)   Section E: measured the 'knowing how' predictor of success dimensions on 5-point Likert-type scale.

3.5   Measurement of Variables

Five-point Likert scales with multiple items were used to measure the independent and dependent variables. The respondents were required to choose to what extent they agreed or disagreed with each of the statement, with (1) being strongly disagree and (5) being strongly agree.

3.5.1 Criterion of Success

Perceived career success was measured using Greenhaus et al's (1990) five-item measure. Coefficient alpha for this measure was 0.91. Perceived internal marketability was measured with three items adapted from Johnson (Eby, Butts, & Lockwood, 2003) Coefficient alpha for this measure was 0.73. Perceived external marketability was measured by three similar items adapted from Johnson (Eby, Butts, & Lockwood, 2003).